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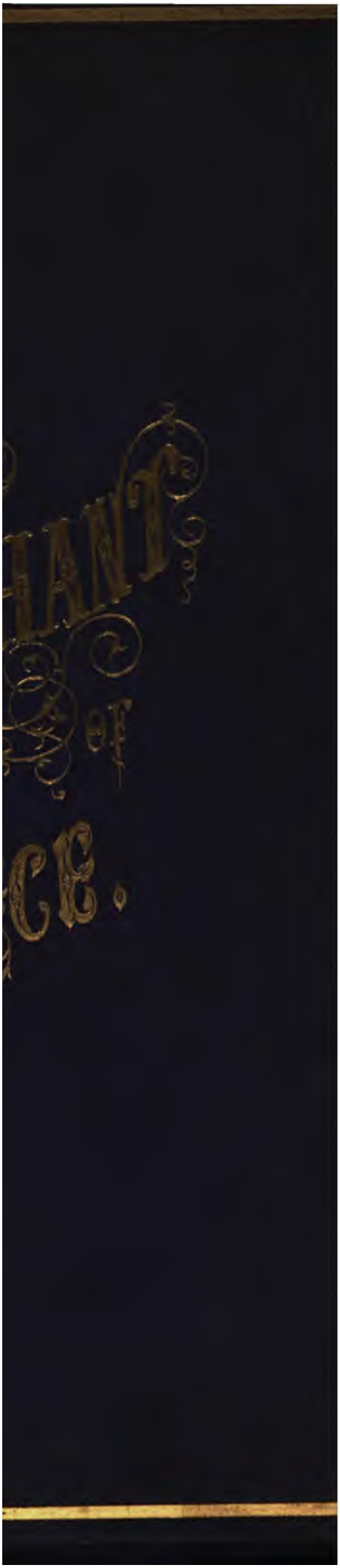
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THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

'Fast bind, fast find,'
A proverb never stale in thrifty mind.

AS PERFORMED BY

Edwin Booth

" "

THE

MERCHANT OF VENICE,

AS PRODUCED AT THE

WINTER GARDEN THEATRE OF NEW YORK,

JANUARY, 1867,

BY

EDWIN BOOTH.

A

NEW ADAPTATION TO THE STAGE.

WITH

NOTES, ORIGINAL AND SELECTED, AND INTRODUCTORY ARTICLES

BY HENRY L. HINTON.

NEW YORK:
PRINTED BY C. A. ALVORD,
15 VANDEWATER STREET.
1867.

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INTRODUCTION.

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE was the first of those greater dramas of Shakespeare which were written in what has been termed the middle period of the poet's career. The first edition of the play (Heyes's Quarto) appeared in 1600; the second edition (Roberts's Quarto) was printed later in the same year; the next formed a part of the folio of 1623.

The materials from which Shakespeare prepared the plot, or, more properly speaking, the plots, of this play, seem to have been derived from various sources. But they receive all their interest from the heightening touch of the poetic artist. Mr. White, the Shakespeare commentator, from whose text the present acting copy has been prepared, remarks on this subject with interest:—

"We find, then, that the story of this comedy, even to its episodic part and its minutest incidents, had been told again and again long before Shakespeare was born,—that even certain expressions in it occur in the works of preceding authors—in Giovanni Fiorentino's version of the story of the Bond, in the story of the Caskets, as told in the Gesta Romanorum, in the Ballad of Gernutus, and in Massuccio di Salerno's novel about the girl who eloped from and robbed her miserly father,—and that it is more than probable that even the combination of the first two of these had been made before The Merchant of Venice was written. What then remains to Shakespeare? and what is there to show that he is not a plagiarist? Every thing that makes The Merchant of Venice what it is. The people are puppets, and the incidents are all in these old stories. They are mere bundles of barren sticks that the poet's touch causes to bloom like Aaron's rod: they are heaps of dry bones till he clothes them with human flesh and breathes into them the breath of life. Antonio, grave, pensive, prudent save in his devotion to his young kinsman, as a Christian hating the Jew, as a royal merchant despising the usurer; Bassanio, lavish yet provident, a generous gentleman although a fortune-seeker, wise, although a gay gallant, and manly though dependent; Gratiano, who unites the not too common virtues of thorough good nature and unselfishness with the sometimes not unserviceable fault of talking for talk's sake; Shylock, crafty and cruel, whose revenge is as mean as it is fierce and furious, whose abuse never rises to invective, or his anger into wrath, and who has yet some dignity of port as the avenger of a nation's wrongs, some claim upon our sympathy as a father outraged by his only child; and Portia,

matchless impersonation of that rare woman who is gifted even more in intellect than loveliness, and who yet stops gracefully short of the offence of intellectuality;—these, not to notice minor characters no less perfectly organized or completely developed after their kind,—these, and the poetry which is their atmosphere, and through which they beam upon us, all radiant in its golden light, are Shakespeare's only; and these it is, and not the incidents of old and, but for these, forgotten tales, that make The Merchant of Venice a priceless and imperishable dower to the queenly city that sits enthroned upon the sea;—a dower of romance more bewitching than that of her moonlit waters and beauty-laden balconies, of adornment more splendid than that of her pictured palaces, of human interest more enduring than that of her blood-stained annals, more touching even than the sight of her faded grandeur."

This play was one of those of our author's productions which were severely handled by the "improvers" of the latter part of the seventeenth century. Indeed, it was not until Macklin restored the original text, in 1741, that the presumptuous "improvements" of this play were banished from the stage. Macklin's adaptation is the one familiar to the theatre of to-day.

Some may ask: Why make an adaptation at all? why not give the play as Shakespeare composed it? Such should remember, that Shakespeare wrote in a primitive day of stage machinery. His auditors did not demand completeness in scenic effects, properties, and costumes, as do those of our time. A compliance with these modern demands makes necessary a transposition of scenes. Still, some will insist, why so much curtailment—such as, in the present instance, that of the whole of the fifth act? The only defence we can offer in this and other cases of less moment, which do not necessarily arise from the introduction of elaborate machinery, is, that our modern audiences rule it thus—they do not admit with patience scenes which, though developing delicate delineations of character, do not help on very notably the plot of the piece. Thus, in this particular play, the plot is consummated in its chief features with the fourth act; and the audience, therefore, immediately jumps to its feet, without waiting to hear out the concluding division of the play, which so exquisitely rounds off and harmonizes the whole production. While it is admitted that the stage should lead the way, and educate the people in matters of taste, still, this is true only to the extent of practicability. The stage can only keep a certain distance in the van of the people; it must give heed to the first law of nature—self-preservation.

Of the performance of this play prior to the restoration of the monarchy, there appear to be no detailed accounts. Richard Burbage, one of the company of which Shakespeare was a member, was the original representative of Shylock. He is spoken of as playing the part in a red beard and wig, a garb adopted, no doubt, to make him the more odious, and to suit the popular appetite of the time.

In 1663, Charles II. granted patents for two theatres in London. The drama again rose and flourished. But what of Shylock? The Jew's character had been denuded of that dignity and intensity which belongs to the original conception, and he had been forced to wear the garb and mien of a low jester and buffoon. The perverted taste of the last half of the seventeenth and the first half of the eighteenth centuries seemed to be unequal to the true appreciation of this grand and gloomy creation of the poet. Yet we hear of such a man as Rowe saying: "I cannot but think the character was *tragically* designed by the author."

Charles Macklin—of whose Shylock Pope said: "This is the Jew that Shake-

speare drew"—was the first, after the restoration, to play Shylock as a serious part. Doran, in his "Annals of the English Stage," thus notices this reform:—

"There was a whisper that he was about to play the Jew as a serious character. His comrades laughed, and the manager was nervous. The rehearsals told them nothing, for there Macklin did little more than walk through the part, lest the manager should prohibit the playing of the piece, if the nature of the reform Macklin was about to introduce should make him fearful of consequences. In some such dress as that we now see worn by Shylock, Macklin, on the night of the 15th of February, 1741, walked down the stage, and, looking through the eyelet-hole in the curtain, saw the two ever-formidable front rows of the pit occupied by the most highly-dreaded critics of the period. The house was also densely crowded. He turned from his survey, calm and content, remarking: 'Good! I shall be tried to-night, by a special jury!'

"There was little applause, to Macklin's disappointment, on his entrance; yet the people were pleased at the aspect of a Jew whom Rembrandt might have painted. The opening scene was spoken in familiar, but earnest accents. Not a hand yet gave token of approbation, but there occasionally reached Macklin's ears, from the two solemn rows of judge and jury in the pit, the sounds of a 'Good!' and 'Very good!' 'Very well, indeed!' and he passed off, more gratified by this than by the slight general applause intended for encouragement.

"As the play proceeded, so did his triumph grow. In the scene with Tubal, which Doggett, in Lansdowne's version, had made so comic, he shook the hearts, and not the sides, of the audience. There was deep emotion in that critical pit. The sympathies of the house went all for Shylock; and at last, a storm of acclamation, a very hurricane of approval, roared pleasantly over Macklin. So far, all was well; but the trial-scene had yet to come.

"It came; and there the triumph culminated. The actor was not loud, nor grotesque; but Shylock was natural, calmly confident, and so terribly malignant, that when he whetted his knife, 'to cut the forfeit from that bankrupt there,' a shudder went round the house, and the profound silence following told Macklin that he held his audience by the heart-strings, and that his hearers must have already acknowledged the truth of his interpretation of Shakespeare's Jew. When the act-drop fell, then the pent-up feelings found vent, and Old Drury shook again with the tumult of applause."

Since the time of Macklin, there have been many representatives of Shylock, of great merit; but we have not space to enlarge upon the peculiarities and the great points of these various performances. Edmund Kean was the next to introduce original features into the performance of Shylock. With this part he first entered upon his career of fame; indeed, we may almost say that his *début* in this *rôle* rescued him from starvation. The circumstance is beautifully told by Doran:—

"At the one morning rehearsal, he fluttered his fellow-actors, and scared the manager, by his independence and originality. 'Sir, this will never do!' cried Raymond, the acting manager. 'It is quite an innovation; it cannot be permitted.'—'Sir,' said the poor, proud man, 'I wish it to be so!' and the players smiled, and Kean went home—that is, to his lodgings, in Cecil Street—on that snowy, foggy 26th of February, 1814, calm, hopeful, and hungry. 'To-day,' said he, 'I must *dine!*'

"Having accomplished that rare feat, he went forth alone, and on foot. 'I wish,' he remarked, 'I was going to be shot!' He had with him a few properties,

which he was bound to procure for himself, tied up in a poor handkerchief, under his arm. His wife remained, with their child, at home. Kean tramped on beneath the falling snow, and over that which thickly encumbered the ground—solid here, there in slush;—and, by and by, pale, quiet, but fearless, he dressed, in a room shared by two or three others, and went down to the wing by which he was to enter. Hitherto, no one had spoken to him save Jack Bannister, who said a cheering word; and Oxberry, who had tendered to him a glass, and wished him good fortune. 'By Jove!' exclaimed a first-rater, looking at him, 'Shylock in a black wig! Well!!'

"The house could hold, as it is called, £600; there was not more than a sixth of that sum in front. Winter without, his comrades within;—all was against him. At length he went on, with Rae, as Bassanio, in ill-humor; and groups of actors at the wings, to witness the first scene of a new candidate. All that Edmund Kean ever did was gracefully done; and the bow which he made, in return to the usual welcoming applause, was eminently graceful. Dr. Drury, the head master of Harrow, who took great interest in him, looked fixedly at him as he came forward. Shylock leant over his crutched stick, with both hands; and, looking askance at Bassanio, said: 'Three thousand ducats?' paused, bethought himself, and then added: 'Well?' '*He is safe*,' said Dr. Drury.

"The groups of actors soon after dispersed to the green-room. As they reached it, there reached there, too, an echo of the loud applause given to Shylock's reply to Bassanio's assurance that he may take the bond: 'I *will be* assured I may!' Later came the sounds of the increased approbation bestowed on the delivery of the passage ending with: 'And for these courtesies, I'll lend you thus much moneys.' The act came to an end gloriously; and the players in the green-room looked for the coming among them of the new Shylock. He proudly kept aloof; knew he was friendless, but felt that he was, in himself, sufficient.

"He wandered about the back of the stage, thinking, perhaps, of the mother and child at home; and sure, now, of having at least made a step toward triumph. He wanted no congratulations; and he walked cheerfully down to the wing where the scene was about to take place between him and his daughter, Jessica, in his very calling to whom: 'Why, Jessica! I say,' there was, as some of us may remember, from an after-night's experience, a charm, as of music. The whole scene was played with rare merit; but the absolute triumph was not won till the scene (which was marvellous in his hands) in the third act, between Shylock, Solanio, and Salarino, ending with the dialogue between the first and Tubal. Shylock's anguish at his daughter's flight; his wrath at the two Christians, who make sport of his anguish; his hatred of all Christians, generally, and of Antonio in particular; and then his alternations of rage, grief, and ecstasy, as Tubal relates the losses incurred in the search for that naughty Jessica, her extravagances, and then the ill-luck that had fallen upon Antonio. In all this, there was such originality, such terrible force, such assurance of a new and mighty master, that the house burst forth into a very whirlwind of approbation. 'What now?' was the cry in the green-room. The answer was, that the presence and the power of the genius were acknowledged with an enthusiasm which shook the very roof."

Dunlap, in his "History of the American Theatre," says: "On the 5th of September, 1752, at Williamsburg, the capital of Virginia, the first play performed in America, by a regular company of comedians, was represented to a delighted

audience. The piece was The Merchant of Venice." Subsequent writers have shown this statement to be erroneous,* and that, while The Merchant of Venice may have then for the first time been presented to an American audience, it was preceded by Richard III. and Othello, at New York. Richard III. was given, as probably the first effort of a company of Thespians in that city, on the 5th of March, 1750. It will interest Knickerbockers to know that the theatre which witnessed this early performance was situated, as shown by J. N. Ireland, in his forthcoming work on the New York Stage (with the advance sheets of which we have been favored by the publisher, T. H. Morrell), "on the east side of Nassau Street (formerly Kip Street), between John Street and Maiden Lane, on lots now known by the numbers 64 and 66 (1866)." The performers on this occasion, it will please the good people of the City of Brotherly Love to learn, were driven from Philadelphia as a set of "vagabonds."

The Merchant of Venice was, without doubt, introduced to the New York audience in the fall of 1753, by the same company which, as Dunlap states, opened in Williamsburg a year previous. From that day to this, the play has stood among the first in favor in New York and the other principal cities of the country.

Of all the actors who have essayed the rôle of Shylock on our American stage, nó one seems to have left so lasting an impression as Junius Brutus Booth. The following *critique* will give the reader, who may not have had the good fortune to see and hear for himself, a conception of the "elder Booth's" peculiar rendition of this character:—

"Booth's interpretation of the part of Shylock differed greatly from that which was popular on the stage of his day. The superficial features of the Jew's character are patent to every one—his greed, his miserliness, his implacable revengefulness;—but, in the refined handling of this great artist, these traits were made the mere outworks behind which was seated a grand reserved force, which the spectator found it difficult to analyze, but the presence of which was none the less powerfully felt. The Jew stood forth as the representative of his race; he wrapped up in himself the dignity of the patriarchs of his people. But this does not express all; in the person of Shylock, as given by Booth, the old faith, recognizing justice alone, not mercy—'an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth'—was brought into contrast with that which superseded it, as represented in the person of Antonio and beautifully expounded by Portia. Mercy 'is twice blessed; it blesses him that gives, and him that takes,' saith Portia. 'I crave the law,' saith the Jew.

"No man was more catholic in his sentiments than Booth. He read the Koran, and often attended the synagogues. He sympathized with the Jews as an oppressed and reviled race, and knew how to assume the Hebraic stand-point. The Jewish race stood to him for an idea—the inexorableness of law; and the conception of a people selected as the guardian and minister of this law, as the arm of fate, affected his imagination profoundly. Why shall not Shylock exact his usances? Why shall he not demand the penalty and forfeit of his bond? Are they not all Christian dogs—gentiles, accursed by the law? In the person of Shylock, Booth embodied

* As early as 1733 there existed a "play-house" in New York, but the legitimate drama was performed, if at all, in a very crude manner, the play-house being used principally for puppet-shows and entertainments of like character. It is more than probable that the first company of English actors which crossed the Atlantic first appeared in 1746, in Jamaica, West Indies. The second company, as mentioned by Dunlap, crossed in 1752, and appeared in Williamsburg, Virginia. These two companies afterward united, forming what was long known as the American Company.

all this gloomy grandeur of position, this merciless absoluteness of will. Yet Shylock's more special personality—if we may so express it—his hatred of Antonio, not simply 'for he is a Christian,' but because he has hindered him in his usurious practices, was not merged and lost in his representative character. Booth kept the two distinct, skilfully using the former in order to throw out in darker background the shadowy presence of the latter. Finely in keeping with this rendering of the part, is the exit of Shylock from the machinery of the piece on the termination of the fourth act. The lighter and more graceful work of the play goes on; but Shylock withdraws, and with him this grand, gloomy, cruel past, which he represents, while the light-hearted, forgiving, and forgiven children of the day bring all their wishes to a happy consummation."

COSTUME.

The costume in Venice at the period of the action of this play was, in many instances, so eccentric, that, were it strictly adhered to in representation, "it is to be feared," as White remarks, "that the splendor and faithfulness of the scene would be forgotten in its absurdity, and that the audience would explode in fits of uncontrollable laughter, as the various personages came upon the stage." Fancy "Antonio with a bonnet like an inverted porringer shadowing his melancholy countenance," and his trunk-hose puffed out with bombast to an enormous size. Fancy the gifted Portia mounted on *cioppini*, or, as they have been called, "wooden scaffolds"—"things made of wood, and covered with leather of sundry colors," which were sometimes "half a yard high," or, as another account says, "as high as a man's leg." Fancy Portia, thus gigantically proportioned, led in by "two maids, to keep her from falling." The following cut, which is from a very rare book on costume, supposed to have been published about the year 1600, a copy of which is in the

possession of Richard Grant White, illustrates this strange custom, as well as the general peculiarities of the female dress of the times, and shows the impracticability of putting such quaint "make-ups" upon the stage.

For the female dress of this play, therefore, it will be proper to select from the many beautiful and richly ornate Italian costumes, which have been handed down to

us by painting and the arts of illumination, such as may best suit the temper of each character, and conduce by their antiquity to the imaginative enjoyment of the play. The costume given in the following illustration, taken from Knight's Pictorial Shakespeare, is well suited to the magnificent tastes of the time, and may be adopted with propriety.

The male attire of this period, or such of it, at least, as distinguished the higher class, may be considered of two kinds: that one which was used on festive occasions, or in gayer moods, by all ages, and which was worn at all times, by young gallants who had not reached the age of "eighteen or twenty," and that one which pertained to sedater moods, and occasions of state. Knight, quoting Vecellio, has given an interesting description of these habits. Young lovers, he tells us, "wear, generally, a doublet and breeches of satin, tabby, or other silk, cut or slashed in the form of crosses or stars, through which slashes is seen the lining of colored taffeta; gold buttons, a lace ruff, a bonnet of rich velvet, or silk, with an ornamental band, a silk cloak, and silk stockings, Spanish morocco shoes, a flower in one hand, and their gloves and handkerchief in the other. This habit was worn by many of the nobility, as well of Venice as of other Italian cities." Illustrations in Ferrario represent the high bonnet as in some instances substituted by the more reasonable cap, but in no instance are feathers worn. Full but not very long beards were general.

The other habit, which, as we have said, belonged to maturer years and dignified occasions, consisted of a gown, which was sometimes worn over the gay attire above described. This robe received special modifications, adapting it to special occasions and particular offices; it may be termed the common exterior dress of the Venetians.

The robe or gown of the Doge was of silk of a purple dye, or sometimes of cloth of gold; it came down to the feet, and was encircled about his waist with a richly embroidered belt. Over this was thrown a mantle of cloth of silver, so long as to trail to some extent upon the ground. These garments were "adorned with many curious works, made in colors with needlework." Finally, a cape of ermine encom-

passed his shoulders and reached to the elbows. His head was covered with a thin coif, over which he wore a mitre, corresponding in color with the robe and mantle, and which turned up behind, in the form of a horn. His feet were encased in slippers, or, according to some accounts, sandals.

The chiefs of the Council of Ten, three in number, wore red gowns with red stockings and slippers; the other seven were attired the same, only the color was black. These gowns hung loose, and extended nearly to the ground. A flap, three or four inches wide, of the same color as the gowns, or sometimes black, was worn on the red gowns, and thrown over the left shoulder. The sleeves were large and flowing, reaching almost to the ground. "All these gowned men," says Croyat, "do wear marvellous little black caps of felt, without any brims at all, and very diminutive falling bands, no ruffs at all, which are so shallow, that I have seen many of them not above a little inch deep."

For the dress of the Doctor of Laws, Knight gives the following from Vecellio: "The upper robe was of black damask cloth, velvet, or silk, according to the weather. The under one of black silk, with a silk sash, the ends of which hang down to the middle of the leg; the stockings of black cloth or velvet, the cap of rich velvet or silk." The sleeves of the gown of the Doctor of Laws, though very full, were tight at the wrist; and a flap, as in the case of the Council, thrown over the left shoulder. The lawyer's clerk was also dressed in black, the gown extending about to the ankles.

Gondoliers in Ferrario are represented in tight-fitting jackets and breeches. Pages and servants, in jackets and short trunks; artisans, in short gowns.

But how are Shylock and the "pretty Jessica" to be attired?

Touching the dress of Jewish women, Cæsar Vecellio, in his "Habiti Antiche e Moderni," 1598, says that they wore yellow veils, but in other respects differed not from Christian women of the same rank. They were distinguished, however, by being "highly painted."

The Jewish men also differed in nothing, in respect of dress, from Venetians of the same walk, except that they were compelled, by order of the government, to wear a yellow bonnet. The story is, that the color was changed from red to yellow because a Jew was accidentally taken for a cardinal. Saint Didier, it is true, in his "Histoire de Venise," says that the color of the bonnet was "scarlet;" but the best authority, Vecellio, reports that it was yellow. "It is not impossible," as Knight remarks, "that the 'orange-tawny bonnet' might have been worn of so deep a color, by some of the Hebrew population, as to have been described as red by a careless observer, or that some Venetian Jews, in fact, did venture to wear red caps or bonnets in defiance of the statutes, and thereby misled the traveller or the historian." Shylock speaks of his "Jewish gaberdine." In old English this word was applied to a loose, coarse, and, perhaps, motley garment, worn by a prescribed class, or the poorer sort; and in Scottish dialect it still retains this usage. Shakespeare, therefore, caring only for the picturesque appointments of his play, seems to have meant, by the "Jewish gaberdine," an article of dress distinctive of the Hebrew class; nor in this case can we introduce historical accuracy of costume without marring the effect of the piece.

It is seen, then, in some instances to be advantageous, and in others to be strictly necessary, to modify the costume in putting this great work of our author upon the stage. The Venice of Shakespeare's day has been usually set as the time of the action of this play, and the above detail of costume is of that date, but the stories

upon which the play is founded are much older. White says: "Any Italian costume, rich, beautiful, and sufficiently antique to remove the action out of the range of present probabilities, will meet the dramatic requirements of this play; but the orange-tawny bonnet, that mark of an outcast race, ought not to be missed from the brow of Shylock."

The dress worn by the youth of the latter part of the fourteenth and during the fifteenth centuries contains many elegant features, and may be adopted in part, or in all its details, with good effect.

Ferrario thus describes the toilet of young noblemen of this period: "They brought a few curls over the forehead, and allowed the rest of the hair to fall in waves upon the shoulders; they donned a coat, which reached to the middle of the leg, and was embroidered with various flowers in silk and gold, and was fastened in front with gold buttons and gathered about the waist with a silk belt, from which hung a sword on the left side; this coat was adorned with lace, and had a hood, which hung down below the belt; the sleeves enveloped the arm as far as the elbow, and then hung open in more or less long pendants. They wore hose of red cloth, and low, laced shoes."

In other instances, this upper garment, according to the same author, was much shorter, sometimes not covering the hips; in this case it has tight sleeves reaching to the wrist. The hoods "were very small, and had 'beaks' falling back almost to the ground." "The men were also adorned with necklaces or bands of silver, studded with pearls or red coral, and many young men went bearded." Another variety of this dress, peculiar perhaps to a somewhat more youthful age, consists of a striped hose extending up the whole leg, and a doublet or jacket, "open at the breast and tightened about the loins with a belt, after the manner of the ladies of our time." Ferrario pronounces this costume "simple and beautiful." Wahlen, in describing the dress of a young Venetian of this period, adds to details similar to those above given, that of a cloak, thrown over and completely enveloping the coat or doublet, and reaching as low as the breech. This cloak is lined with material of a different color, and is edged with gold. It does not "open on the side, but is looped up to the right shoulder." With this was worn, for "coiffeur," a linen bonnet of some rich color, and of moderate height.

At the various revivals of The Merchant of Venice, it has been customary to adopt, in the male attire, what is called the "Venetian Shape,"—a dress similar to that described in the early part of this article, as worn by "young lovers." But the puffing out of the breeches with bombast,—a marked feature of this costume,—has never, and perhaps with good reason, been introduced. The dress to which we have given the preference, the distinguishing mark of which is what is known on the stage as "the hauberk," may be followed with more historical fidelity, and is undoubtedly the more picturesque of the two.

CAST OF THE MERCHANT OF VENICE,

AS REVIVED AT

DRURY LANE THEATRE, FEBRUARY 15, 1741,

On which occasion the play was for the first time since the Restoration performed from the original text, and Shylock rendered as a serious character.

ANTONIO	QUIN.
BASSANIO	MILWARD.
GRATIANO	MILLS.
SHYLOCK	MACKLIN.
LAUNCELOT	CHAPMAN.
PRINCE OF MOROCCO	CASHELL.
PRINCE OF ARRAGON	TURBUTT.
LORENZO	HAVARD.
GOBBO	JOHNSON.
TUBAL	TASWELL.
PORTIA	Mrs. CLIVE.
NERISSA	Mrs. PRITCHARD.
JESSICA	Mrs. WOODMAN.

CAST OF THE MERCHANT OF VENICE,

AS PLAYED FOR THE FIRST TIME IN THIS COUNTRY,

WILLIAMSBURG, VIRGINIA, SEPTEMBER 5, 1752.

SHYLOCK	MALONE.
BASSANIO	RIGBY.
ANTONIO	CLARKSON.
GRATIANO	SINGLETON.
SALANIO, DUKE,	HERBERT.
SALARINO, GOBBO,	WINNEL.
LAUNCELOT, TUBAL,	HALLAM.
BALTHAZAR	Master LEWIS HALLAM.

His first appearance on any stage.

PORTIA	Mrs. HALLAM.
NERISSA	Miss PALMER.
JESSICA	Miss HALLAM.

Her first appearance on any stage.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

Of the Merchant of Venice, as represented at the Winter Garden Theatre, New York, 1867, under the immediate supervision of Mr. EDWIN BOOTH.

DIRECTOR, W. STUART.....STAGE MANAGER, J. G. HANLEY.....SCENIC ARTIST, C. W. WITHAM.

DUKE OF VENICE	W. DONALDSON.
PRINCE OF ARRAGON, Suitor to PORTIA	JAMES DUFF.
ANTONIO, the Merchant of Venice	M. W. LEFFINGWELL.
BASSANIO, his Friend	J. NEWTON GOTTHOLD.
GRATIANO, } Friends to ANTONIO and BASSANIO	BARTON HILL.
SALANIO, } Friends to ANTONIO and BASSANIO	W. NELSON DECKER.
SALARINO, } Friends to ANTONIO and BASSANIO	HENRY L. HINTON.
LORENZO, in love with JESSICA	MARSHALL OLIVER.
SHYLOCK, a Jew	EDWIN BOOTH.
TUBAL, a Jew, his Friend	J. DUELL.
LAUNCELOT GOBBO, a Clown	W. S. ANDREWS.
OLD GOBBO, Father to LAUNCELOT	W. DAVIDGE.
SALERIO, a Messenger	CLAUDE D. BURROUGHS.
LEONARDO, Servant to BASSANIO	H. HOGAN.
BALTHAZAR, Servant to PORTIA	J. SUTTON.
PORTIA, a rich Heiress	MARIE METHUA SCHELLER.
NERISSA, her Waiting-woman	M. CUSHING.
JESSICA, Daughter to SHYLOCK	E. JOHNSON.

Magnificoes of Venice, Officers of the Court of Justice, Jailers, Servants, and other Attendants.

SCENE: Partly at Venice, partly at Belmont, and partly at Genoa.

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ENGRAVER, D. W. C. CAMMEYER.

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—Venice.—A Street.

Enter ANTONIO, SALARINO, *and* SALANIO.

Antonio. In sooth, I know not why I am so sad:
It wearies me; you say, it wearies you:
But how I caught it, found it, or came by it,
What stuff 'tis made of, whereof it is born,
I am to learn;
And such a want-wit sadness makes of me,
That I have much ado to know myself.

Salarino. Your mind is tossing on the ocean,
There, where your argosies[1] with portly sail,
Like signiors and rich burghers on the flood,[2]
Or, as it were, the pageants of the sea,
Do overpeer the petty traffickers,
That curt'sy to them, do them reverence,
As they fly by them with their woven wings.

Salanio. Believe me, sir, had I such venture forth,
The better part of my affections would
Be with my hopes abroad. I should be still
Plucking the grass to know where sits the wind,[3]
Peering in maps for ports, and piers, and roads;
And every object that might make me fear
Misfortune to my ventures, out of doubt,
Would make me sad.

Salar. My wind, cooling my broth,
Would blow me to an ague, when I thought
What harm a wind too great might do at sea
I should not see the sandy hour-glass run,
But I should think of shallows and of flats,
And see my wealthy Andrew[4] dock'd in sand,
Vailing[5] her high top lower than her ribs,
To kiss her burial. Should I go to church,
And see the holy edifice of stone,
And not bethink me straight of dangerous rocks,
Which, touching but my gentle vessel's side,
Would scatter all her spices on the stream,
Enrobe the roaring waters with my silks,
And,—in a word, but even now worth this,
And now worth nothing? Shall I have the thought
To think on this, and shall I lack the thought,
That such a thing bechanc'd would make me sad?
But, tell not me: I know, Antonio
Is sad to think upon his merchandize.

Ant. Believe me, no. I thank my fortune for it,
My ventures are not in one bottom trusted,
Nor to one place; nor is my whole estate
Upon the fortune of this present year:
Therefore, my merchandize makes me not sad.

Salar. Why, then you are in love.

Ant. Fye, fye!

Salar. Not in love neither? Then let's say, you are sad,
Because you are not merry; and 'twere as easy
For you to laugh, and leap, and say, you are merry,
Because you are not sad. Now, by two-headed Janus,[6]

---

[1] *Argosies.*—*Argosies* are large ships, either for merchandise or for war. The name was probably derived from the classical ship Argo, which carried Jason and the Argonauts in quest of the golden fleece.—HUDSON.

[2] *Like signiors and rich burghers on the flood.*—The "signiors and rich burghers *on* the flood," are the Venetians, who may well be said to live *on* the sea.—DOUCE.

[3] *Plucking the grass to know where sits the wind.*—By holding up the grass, or any other light body that will bend by a gentle blast, the direction of the wind is found.—JOHNSON.

[4] *Andrew.*—This name was probably a common one for ships, in compliment to Andrea Doria, the great Genoese Admiral.—WHITE.

[5] *Vailing.*—To *vail* is to lower: from the French *avaler.*

[6] *Two-headed Janus.*—By *two-headed* Janus, is meant those ancient bifrontine heads which generally represent a young and smiling face, together with an old and wrinkled one, being of Pan and Bacchus, of Saturn and Apollo, &c.—WARBURTON.

Nature hath fram'd strange fellows in her time:
Some that will evermore peep through their eyes,
And laugh, like parrots, at a bag-piper;
And other of such vinegar aspect,
That they'll not show their teeth in way of smile.
Though Nestor swear the jest be laughable.
Salan. Here comes Bassanio, your most noble kinsman,
Gratiano, and Lorenzo. Fare ye well:
We leave you now with better company.
Salar. I would have stay'd till I had made you merry,
If worthier friends had not prevented me.
Ant. Your worth is very dear in my regard.
I take it, your own business calls on you,
And you embrace th' occasion to depart.

Enter BASSANIO, LORENZO, *and* GRATIANO.

Salar. Good morrow, my good lords.
Bassanio. Good signiors both, when shall we laugh? Say, when?
You grow exceeding strange: must it be so?
Salar. We'll make our leisures to attend on yours. [*Exeunt* SALARINO *and* SALANIO.
Lorenzo. My lord Bassanio, since you have found Antonio,
We two will leave you; but at dinner-time,
I pray you, have in mind where we must meet.
Bass. I will not fail you.
Gratiano. You look not well, Signior Antonio;
You have too much respect upon the world:
They lose it, that do buy it with much care.
Believe me, you are marvellously chang'd.
Ant. I hold the world but as the world, Gratiano;
A stage, where every man must play a part,
And mine a sad one.
Gra. Let me play the fool:
With mirth and laughter let old wrinkles come,
And let my liver rather heat with wine,
Than my heart cool with mortifying groans.
Why should a man, whose blood is warm within,
Sit like his grandsire cut in alabaster?
Sleep when he wakes, and creep into the jaundice
By being peevish? I tell thee what, Antonio,—
I love thee, and it is my love that speaks;—
There are a sort of men, whose visages
Do cream and mantle, like a standing pond,
And do a wilful stillness entertain,
With purpose to be dress'd in an opinion
Of wisdom, gravity, profound conceit;
As who should say, 'I am Sir Oracle,
And, when I ope my lips, let no dog bark!'
O! my Antonio, I do know of these,
That therefore only are reputed wise,
For saying nothing; when, I am very sure,
If they should speak, would almost damn those ears,
Which, hearing them, would call their brothers fools.[1]
I'll tell thee more of this another time:
But fish not, with this melancholy bait,
For this fool-gudgeon,[2] this opinion.—
Come, good Lorenzo.—Fare ye well, a while:
I'll end my exhortation after dinner.[3]
Lor. Well, we will leave you, then, till dinner-time.
I must be one of these same dumb wise men,
For Gratiano never lets me speak.
Gra. Well, keep me company but two years more,
Thou shalt not know the sound of thine own tongue.
Ant. Farewell: I'll grow a talker for this gear.[4]
Gra. Thanks, i'faith; for silence is only commendable
In a neat's tongue dri'd, and a maid not vendible. [*Exeunt* GRATIANO *and* LORENZO.
Ant. Is that anything now?
Bass. Gratiano speaks an infinite deal of nothing, more than any man in all Venice. His reasons are as two grains of wheat hid in two bushels of chaff: you shall seek all day ere you find them; and when you have them, they are not worth the search.
Ant. Well; tell me now, what lady is the same
To whom you swore a secret pilgrimage,
That you to-day promis'd to tell me of?
Bass. 'Tis not unknown to you, Antonio,
How much I have disabled mine estate,
By something showing a more swelling port[5]
Than my faint means would grant continuance:
Nor do I now make moan to be abridg'd
From such a noble rate; but my chief care
Is to come fairly off from the great debts,
Wherein my time, something too prodigal,
Hath left me gaged. To you, Antonio,
I owe the most, in money, and in love;
And from your love I have a warranty
To unburthen all my plots and purposes,
How to get clear of all the debts I owe.
Ant. I pray you, good Bassanio, let me know it;
And if it stand, as you yourself still do,
Within the eye of honour, be assur'd,
My purse, my person, my extremest means,
Lie all unlock'd to your occasions.
Bass. In my school-days, when I had lost one shaft,
I shot his fellow of the self-same flight
The self-same way, with more advised watch,
To find the other forth; and by adventuring both,
I oft found both. I urge this childhood proof,

---

[1] *Damn those ears, * * * brothers fools.*—Some people are thought wise while they keep silence, who, when they open their mouths, are such stupid praters that the hearers can not help calling them fools, and so incur the judgment denounced in the gospel against him who "says to his brother, Thou fool."—THEOBALD.

[2] *Fool-gudgeon.—Gudgeon* was the name of a small fish very easily caught.—HUDSON.

[3] *I'll end my exhortation after dinner.*—The humor of this consists in its being an allusion to the practice of the Puritan preachers of those times; who, being generally very long and tedious, were often forced to put off that part of their sermon called the *exhortation* till after dinner.—WARBURTON.

[4] *For this gear*—for this matter.

[5] *Port*—appearance.

Because what follows is pure innocence.
I owe you much, and, like a wilful youth,
That which I owe is lost; but if you please
To shoot another arrow that self way
Which you did shoot the first, I do not doubt,—
As I will watch the aim,—or to find both,
Or bring your latter hazard back again,
And thankfully rest debtor for the first.

Ant. You know me well, and herein spend but time,
To wind about my love with circumstance;
And, out of doubt, you do me now more wrong,
In making question of my uttermost,
Than if you had made waste of all I have:
Then, do but say to me what I should do,
That in your knowledge may by me be done,
And I am prest[1] unto it: therefore, speak.

Bass. In Belmont is a lady richly left;
And she is fair, and, fairer than that word,
Of wondrous virtues: sometimes[2] from her eyes
I did receive fair speechless messages.
Her name is Portia; nothing undervalued
To Cato's daughter, Brutus' Portia.
Nor is the wide world ignorant of her worth
For the four winds blow in from every coast
Renowned suitors; and her sunny locks
Hang on her temples like a golden fleece:
Which makes her seat of Belmont Colchos' strand,
And many Jasons come in quest of her.
O, my Antonio! had I but the means
To hold a rival place with one of them,
I have a mind presages me such thrift,
That I should questionless be fortunate.

Ant. Thou know'st that all my fortunes are at sea;
Neither have I money, nor commodity
To raise a present sum: therefore, go forth
Try what my credit can in Venice do;
That shall be rack'd, even to the uttermost,
To furnish thee to Belmont, to fair Portia.
Go, presently inquire, and so will I,
Where money is; and I no question make,
To have it of my trust, or for my sake. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—Belmont.—An Apartment in PORTIA'S House.

Enter PORTIA *and* NERISSA.

Portia. By my troth, Nerissa, my little body is aweary of this great world.

Nerissa. You would be, sweet Madam, if your miseries were in the same abundance as your good fortunes are. And, yet, for aught I see, they are as sick, that surfeit with too much, as they that starve with nothing: it is no small happiness, therefore, to be seated in the mean: superfluity comes sooner by white hairs,[3] but competency lives longer.

Por. Good sentences, and well pronounc'd

Ner. They would be better if well followed.

Por. If to do were as easy as to know what were good to do, chapels had been churches, and poor men's cottages princes' palaces. It is a good divine that follows his own instructions: I can easier teach twenty what were good to be done, than be one of the twenty to follow mine own teaching. The brain may devise laws for the blood; but a hot temper leaps o'er a cold decree: such a hare is madness, the youth, to skip o'er the meshes of good counsel, the cripple. But this reasoning is not in the fashion to choose me a husband.—O me! the word choose! I may neither choose whom I would, nor refuse whom I dislike: so is the will of a living daughter curb'd by the will of a dead father.—Is it not hard, Nerissa, that I cannot choose one, nor refuse none?

Ner. Your father was ever virtuous, and holy men at their death have good inspirations; therefore, the lottery, that he hath devised in these three chests, of gold, silver, and lead, (whereof who chooses his meaning, chooses you,) will, no doubt, never be chosen by any rightly, but one who you shall rightly love. But what warmth is there in your affection towards any of these princely suitors that are already come?

Por. I pray thee over-name them, and as thou namest them, I will describe them; and, according to my description, level at my affection.

Ner First, there is the Neapolitan Prince.

Por. Ay, that's a colt, indeed,[4] for he doth nothing but talk of his horse; and he makes it a great appropriation to his own good parts that he can shoe him himself. I am much afraid my lady his mother play'd false with a smith.

Ner. Then, is there the County Palatine.

Por. He doth nothing but frown, as who should say, 'An you will not have me, choose.' He hears merry tales, and smiles not: I fear he will prove the weeping philosopher[5] when he grows old, being so full of unmannerly sadness in his youth. I had rather be married to a death's head with a bone in his mouth than to either of these. God defend me from these two!

Ner. How say you by the French lord, Monsieur Le Bon?

Por. God made him, and therefore let him pass for a man. In truth, I know it is a sin to be a mocker: but, he! why, he hath a horse better than the Neapolitan's; a better bad habit of frowning than the Count Palatine: he is every man in no man; if a throstle sing, he falls straight a cap'ring: he will fence with his own shadow. If I should marry him, I should marry twenty husbands. If he would despise me, I would forgive him: for if he love me to madness, I shall never requite him.

Ner. What say you, then, to Faulconbridge, the young Baron, of England?

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[1] *Prest*—ready.

[2] *Sometimes*—formerly.

[3] *Superfluity comes sooner by white hairs*—superfluity sooner acquires white hairs; becomes old. We still say, How did he *come by it*.—MALONE.

[4] *A colt indeed*.—This term is applied to the Prince in question, on account of the high repute of the Neapolitan horsemanship.—WHITE.

[5] *Weeping philosopher*.—Heraclitus, a philosopher of Athens, so called; who, whenever he went abroad, wept at the miseries of the world.—GREY.

Por. You know I say nothing to him, for he understands not me, nor I him: he hath neither Latin, French, nor Italian; and you will come into the court and swear that I have a poor penny-worth in the English. He is a proper[1] man's picture; but, alas! who can converse with a dumb show? How oddly he is suited! I think he bought his doublet in Italy, his round hose in France, his bonnet in Germany, and his behaviour every where.

Ner. What think you of the Scottish lord, his neighbour?

Por. That he hath a neighbourly charity in him; for he borrowed a box of the ear of the Englishman, and swore he would pay him again when he was able: I think[2] the Frenchman became his surety, and seal'd under for another.

Ner. How like you the young German, the Duke of Saxony's nephew?

Por. Very vilely in the morning, when he is sober, and most vilely in the afternoon, when he is drunk: when he is best, he is little worse than a man; and when he is worst, he is little better than a beast. An the worst fall that ever fell, I hope I shall make shift to go without him.

Ner. If he should offer to choose, and choose the right casket, you should refuse to perform your father's will, if you should refuse to accept him.

Por. Therefore, for fear of the worst, I pray thee set a deep glass of Rhenish wine on the contrary casket; for, if the Devil be within, and that temptation without, I know he will choose it. I will do any thing, Nerissa, ere I will be married to a spunge.

Ner. You need not fear, lady, the having any of these lords: they have acquainted me with their determinations; which is indeed, to return to their home, and to trouble you with no more suit, unless you may be won by some other sort[3] than your father's imposition depending on the caskets.

Por. If I live to be as old as Sibylla, I will die as chaste as Diana, unless I be obtained by the manner of my father's will. I am glad this parcel of wooers are so reasonable; for there is not one among them but I dote on his very absence; and I wish them a fair departure.

Ner. Do you not remember, lady, in your father's time, a Venetian, a scholar and a soldier, that came hither in company of the Marquis of Montferrat?

Por. Yes, yes; it was Bassanio: as I think, so was he called.

Ner. True, Madam: he, of all the men that ever my foolish eyes look'd upon, was the best deserving a fair lady.

Por. I remember him well, and I remember him worthy of thy praise.

Enter BALTHAZAR.

Balthazar. The four strangers seek you, Madam, to take their leave; and there is a forerunner come from a fifth, the Prince of Morocco, who brings word the Prince, his master, will be here to-night.

Por. If I could bid the fifth welcome with so good heart as I can bid the other four farewell, I should be glad of his approach: if he have the condition[4] of a saint, and the complexion of a devil, I had rather he should shrive me than wive me.

Come, Nerissa.—Sirrah, go before.

Whiles we shut the gate upon one wooer, another knocks at the door. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—Venice.—A Street.

Enter BASSANIO *and* SHYLOCK.

Shylock. Three thousand ducats,—well.

Bass. Ay, sir, for three months.

Shy. For three months,—well.

Bass. For the which, as I told you, Antonio shall be bound.

Shy. Antonio shall become bound,—well.

Bass. May you stead me? Will you pleasure me? Shall I know your answer?

Shy. Three thousand ducats for three months, and Antonio bound.

Bass. Your answer to that.

Shy. Antonio is a good man.

Bass. Have you heard any imputation to the contrary?

Shy. Ho! no, no, no, no:—my meaning, in saying he is a good man, is to have you understand me, that he is sufficient; yet his means are in supposition. He hath an argosy bound to Tripolis, another to the Indies: I understand moreover upon the Rialto, he hath a third at Mexico, a fourth for England, and other ventures he hath squandered[5] abroad; but ships are but boards, sailors but men: there be landrats and water-rats, land-thieves and water-thieves,—I mean, pirates: and then, there is the peril of waters, winds, and rocks. The man is, notwithstanding, sufficient: three thousand ducats.—I think I may take his bond.

Bass. Be assured you may.

Shy. I will be assured I may; and that I may be assured, I will bethink me. May I speak with Antonio?

Bass. If it please you to dine with us.

Shy. Yes, to smell pork; to eat of the habitation which your prophet, the Nazarite, con-

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[1] *Proper*—handsome.

[2] *I think*, &c.—Alluding to the constant assistance, or rather constant promises of assistance that the French gave the Scots in their quarrels with the English. This alliance is here humorously satirized.—WARBURTON.

[3] *Sort*—lot.

[4] *Condition*—disposition.

[5] *Squandered.*—In a letter published by Mr. Waldron, in Woodfall's 'Theatrical Repertory,' 1801, it is stated that "Macklin, mistakenly, spoke the word with a tone of reprobation, implying that Antonio had, as we say of prodigals, unthriftily squandered his wealth." The meaning is simply *scattered*; of which Mr. Waldron gives an example from Howell's 'Letters:' "The Jews, once an elect people, but now grown contemptible, and strangely *squander'd* up and down the world."—KNIGHT.

jured the Devil into. I will buy with you, sell with you, talk with you, walk with you, and so following; but I will not eat with you, drink with you, nor pray with you. What news on the Rialto?[1]—Who is he comes here?

Bass. This is Signior Antonio.

[*Exit* BASSANIO.

Shy. How like a fawning publican he looks!
I hate him for he is a Christian;[2]
But more for that, in low simplicity,
He lends out money gratis, and brings down
The rate of usance[3] here with us in Venice.
If I can catch him once upon the hip,[4]
I will feed fat the ancient grudge I bear him.
He hates our sacred nation; and he rails,
Even there where merchants most do congregate,
On me, my bargains, and my well-won thrift,
Which he calls interest. Cursed be my tribe,
If I forgive him!

Enter BASSANIO *and* ANTONIO.

Bass. [*After a pause.*] Shylock, do you hear?

Shy. I am debating of my present store.
And, by the near guess of my memory,
I cannot instantly raise up the gross
Of full three thousand ducats. What of that?
Tubal, a wealthy Hebrew of my tribe,
Will furnish me. But soft! how many months
Do you desire?—Rest you fair, good signior;
[*To* ANTONIO.
Your worship was the last man in our mouths.

Ant. Shylock, albeit I neither lend nor borrow
By taking, nor by giving of excess,
Yet, to supply the ripe wants of my friend,
I'll break a custom.—Is he yet possess'd,[5]
How much you would?

Shy. Ay, ay, three thousand ducats.

Ant. And for three months.

Shy. I had forgot:—three months; you told me so.
Well then, your bond; and let me see—But hear you:
Methought, you said, you neither lend nor borrow
Upon advantage.

Ant. I do never use it.

Shy. When Jacob graz'd his uncle Laban's sheep,

---

[1] *On the Rialto.*—The Rialto, one of the islands upon which Venice is built, gave its name first to the Exchange which was built upon it, and then to the bridge by which it was reached. It may mean here either of the former; but probably the second of them.—WHITE.

[2] *I hate him for he is a Christian.*—The lack of a point between 'him' and 'for' here, is not accidental. Shylock does not say he hates Antonio and *add* his reason; but makes a simple statement of a simple thought (single though composed of two elements)—that he hates the Merchant because he is a Christian. This use of 'for' was common in Shakespeare's day.—WHITE.

[3] *The rate of usance.*—Usance, usury, and interest, were all terms of precisely the same import in Shakespeare's time; there being then no such law or custom whereby usury has since come to mean the taking of interest above a certain rate.—HUDSON.

[4] *Upon the hip.*—This, Dr. Johnson observes, is a phrase taken from the practice of wrestlers; and (he might have added) is an allusion to the angel's thus laying hold on Jacob when he wrestled with him. See Gen. xxxii. 24, &c.—HENLEY.

[5] *Possess'd*—informed.

—This Jacob from our holy Abram was
(As his wise mother wrought in his behalf)
The third possessor; ay, he was the third.—
Ant. And what of him? did he take interest?
Shy. No, not take interest; not, as you would say,
Directly interest: mark what Jacob did.
When Laban and himself were compromis'd,
That all the eanlings[1] which were streak'd and pied,
Should fall as Jacob's hire;
The skilful shepherd pill'd[2] me certain wands,
And, in the doing of the deed of kind,[3]
He stuck them up before the fulsome ewes
Who, then conceiving, did in eaning time
Fall[4] party-colour'd lambs; and those were Jacob's.
This was a way to thrive, and he was bless'd:
And thrift is blessing, if men steal it not.
Ant. This was a venture, sir, that Jacob serv'd for;
A thing not in his power to bring to pass,
But sway'd, and fashion'd, by the hand of Heaven.
Was this inserted to make interest good?
Or is your gold and silver ewes and rams?
Shy. I cannot tell: I make it breed as fast.—
But note me, Signior.
Ant. Mark you this, Bassanio,
The Devil can cite Scripture for his purpose.
An evil soul, producing holy witness,
Is like a villain with a smiling cheek;
A goodly apple rotten at the heart.
O, what a goodly outside falsehood hath!
Shy. Three thousand ducats;—'tis a good round sum.
Three months from twelve, then let me see the rate.
Ant. Well, Shylock, shall we be beholden to you?
Shy. Signior Antonio, many a time and oft,
In the Rialto you have rated me
About my moneys, and my usances:
Still have I borne it with a patient shrug;
For suff'rance is the badge of all our tribe.
You call me misbeliever, cut-throat dog,
And spet[5] upon my Jewish gaberdine,
And all for use of that which is mine own.
Well then, it now appears, you need my help:
Go to then; you come to me, and you say,
'Shylock, we would have moneys:' you say so;
You, that did void your rheum upon my beard,
And foot me, as you spurn a stranger cur
Over your threshold: moneys is your suit.
What should I say to you? Should I not say,
'Hath a dog money? is it possible,
A cur should lend three thousand ducats?' or
Shall I bend low, and in a bondman's key,
With 'bated breath, and whisp'ring humbleness,
Say this:——
'Fair sir, you spet on me on Wednesday last;
You spurn'd me such a day; another time
You call'd me dog; and for these courtesies
I'll lend you thus much moneys?'
Ant. I am as like to call thee so again,
To spet on thee again, to spurn thee too.
If thou wilt lend this money, lend it not
As to thy friends; for when did friendship take
A breed[6] of barren metal of his friend?
But lend it rather to thine enemy;
Who if he break, thou may'st with better face
Exact the penalties.
Shy. Why, look you, how you storm!
I would be friends with you, and have your love,
Forget the shames that you have stain'd me with,
Supply your present wants, and take no doit
Of usance for my moneys,
And you'll not hear me. This is kind I offer.
Ant. This were kindness.
Shy. This kindness will I show.
Go with me to a notary; seal me there
Your single bond; and, in a merry sport,
If you repay me not on such a day,
In such a place, such sum or sums as are
Express'd in the condition, let the forfeit
Be nominated for an equal pound
Of your fair flesh, to be cut off and taken
In what part of your body it pleaseth me.
Ant. Content, in faith: I'll seal to such a bond,
And say there is much kindness in the Jew.
Bass. You shall not seal to such a bond for me:
I'll rather dwell in my necessity.
Ant. Why, fear not, man; I will not forfeit it:
Within these two months,—that's a month before
This bond expires,—I do expect return
Of thrice three times the value of this bond.
Shy. O, father Abram! what these Christians are,
Whose own hard dealings teaches them suspect
The thoughts of others!—Pray you, tell me this;
If he should break his day, what should I gain
By the exaction of the forfeiture?
A pound of man's flesh, taken from a man,
Is not so estimable, profitable neither,
As flesh of muttons, beefs, or goats. I say,
To buy his favour I extend this friendship:
If he will take it, so; if not, adieu;
And, for my love, I pray you, wrong me not.
Ant. Yes, Shylock, I will seal unto this bond.
Shy. Then meet me forthwith at the notary's.
Give him direction for this merry bond,
And I will go and purse the ducats straight;
See to my house, left in the fearful guard[7]
Of an unthrifty knave, and presently
I will be with you. [*Exit.*
Ant. Hie thee, gentle Jew.
This Hebrew will turn Christian: he grows kind.
Bass. I like not fair terms, and a villain's mind.
Ant. Come on; in this there can be no dismay;
My ships come home a month before the day.
[*Exeunt.*

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[1] *Eanlings*—lambs just brought forth. [2] *Pill'd*—peeled. [3] *Kind*—nature. [4] *Fall*—let fall.

[5] *Spet.*—This is an old form of 'spit,' in which the present and the preterite were the same. Here the present is intended; below, the preterite.—WHITE.

[6] *Breed*—increase.

[7] *Fearful guard.*—A guard that is the cause of fear, because not to be trusted. *Fearful* was anciently often used for *exciting fear*, and is not yet quite obsolete.—VERPLANCK.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—Venice.—Before SHYLOCK'S House.

Enter LAUNCELOT GOBBO.

Launcelot. Certainly, my conscience will serve me to run from this Jew, my master. The fiend is at mine elbow, and tempts me, saying to me, 'Gobbo, Launcelot Gobbo, good Launcelot, or good Gobbo, or good Launcelot Gobbo, use your legs, take the start, run away:' My conscience says,—'No; take heed, honest Launcelot; take heed, honest Gobbo; or, as aforesaid, honest Launcelot Gobbo; do not run; scorn running with thy heels' Well, the most courageous fiend bids me pack; 'Via!' says the fiend; 'away!' says the fiend; 'for the Heavens,[1] rouse up a brave mind,' says the fiend, 'and run.' Well, my conscience, hanging about the neck of my heart, says very wisely to me,—'My honest friend Launcelot, being an honest man's son,'—or rather an honest woman's son;—for, indeed, my father did something smack, something grow to, he had a kind of taste:—well, my conscience says, 'Launcelot, budge not.' 'Budge,' says the fiend: 'budge not,' says my conscience. Conscience, say I, you counsel well; fiend, say I, you counsel well: to be rul'd by my conscience, I should stay with the Jew my master, who, (God bless the mark!) is a kind of devil; and, to run away from the Jew, I should be ruled by the fiend, who, saving your reverence, is the Devil himself. Certainly, the Jew is the very Devil incarnation; and, in my conscience, my conscience is but a kind of hard conscience to offer to counsel me to stay with the Jew. The fiend gives the more friendly counsel: I will run, fiend; my heels are at your commandment; I will run.

Enter Old GOBBO,[2] *with a Basket.*

Gobbo. Master young man, you! I pray you, which is the way to Master Jew's?

Laun. [*Aside.*] O Heavens! this is my true begotten father, who, being more than sand-blind,[3] high-gravel blind,[4] knows me not:—I will try confusions with him.

Gob. Master young gentleman! I pray you, which is the way to Master Jew's?

Laun. Turn up on your right hand at the next turning, but at the next turning of all, on your left; marry, at the very next turning, turn of no hand, but turn down indirectly to the Jew's house.

Gob. 'Twill be a hard way to hit. Can you tell me whether one Launcelot, that dwells with him, dwell with him, or no?

Laun. Talk you of young Master Launcelot?—[*Aside.*] Mark me now; now will I raise the waters.—[*To him.*] Talk you of young Master Launcelot?

Gob. No master, sir, but a poor man's son: his father, though I say't, is an honest exceeding poor man; and, God be thanked, well to live.

Laun. Well, let his father be what 'a will, we talk of young Master Launcelot.

Gob. Your worship's friend, and Launcelot, sir.

Laun. But I pray you, *ergo*, old man, *ergo*, I beseech you, talk you of young Master Launcelot.

Gob. Of Launcelot, an't please your mastership.[5]

Laun. Ergo, Master Launcelot. Talk not of Master Launcelot, father; for the young gentleman (according to fates and destinies, and such odd sayings, the sisters three, and such branches of learning,) is, indeed, deceased; or, as you would say, in plain terms, gone to Heaven.

Gob. Marry, God forbid! the boy was the very staff of my age, my very prop.

Laun. [*Aside.*] Do I look like a cudgel, or a hovel-post, a staff, or a prop?—[*To him.*] Do you know me, father?

Gob. Alack the day! I know you not, young gentleman; but, I pray you, tell me, is my boy (God rest his soul!) alive, or dead?

Laun. Do you not know me, father?[6]

Gob. Alack, sir, I am sand-blind; I know you not.

Laun. Nay, indeed, if you had your eyes, you might fail of the knowing me: it is a wise father, that knows his own child. Well, old man, I will tell you news of your son. [*Kneels.*] Give me your blessing: truth will come to light; murther cannot be hid long; a man's son may, but in the end, truth will out.

Gob. Pray you, sir, stand up. I am sure you are not Launcelot, my boy.

Laun. Pray you, let's have no more fooling about it, but give me your blessing: I am

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[1] *For the Heavens.*—This was a petty oath.

[2] *Gobbo.*—It may be inferred, from the name of Gobbo, that Shakespeare designed the character to be represented with a hump-back.—STEEVENS.

[3] *Sand-blind.*—Having an imperfect sight, as if there were sand in the eye.—NARES.

[4] *High-gravel blind.—Gravel-blind*, a coinage of Launcelot's, is the exaggeration of *sand-blind.*—KNIGHT.

[5] Launcelot whimsically takes his father to task for disrespect to himself—Launcelot, and says, in reply to old Gobbo's statement of their condition in life, "Well, let his father be what he will, we talk of young Master Launcelot." The father, still unable to dub his son 'Master,' replies deprecatingly, "Your worship's friend, and Launcelot," *i. e.*, 'Aye, we speak of your worship's friend, who is Launcelot.' To this, Launcelot, who evidently, like the Grave-digger in Hamlet, understands, after a fashion, the Latin word he uses, rejoins, "But I pray you, *ergo*, old man, *ergo*, I beseech you, talk you of young Master Launcelot," *i. e.*, 'And therefore, because I am "your worship" and he is my friend, you should speak of him as Master Launcelot.'—WHITE.

[6] *Father.*—Twice Launcelot calls Gobbo father, and yet the old man does not even suspect with whom he is talking; the reason of which is the ancient custom, almost universal among the peasantry, of calling all old people father or mother.—WHITE.

Launcelot, your boy that was, your son that is, your child that shall be.

Gob. I cannot think you are my son.

Laun. I know not what I shall think of that; but I am Launcelot, the Jew's man, and, I am sure, Margery, your wife, is my mother.

Gob. Her name is Margery, indeed: I'll be sworn, if thou be Launcelot, thou art mine own flesh and blood. Lord! worshipp'd might he be! what a beard hast thou got: thou hast got more hair on thy chin, than Dobbin, my phill-horse[1] has on his tail.

Laun. It should seem, then, that Dobbin's tail grows backward: I am sure he had more hair of his tail, than I have of my face, when I last saw him.

Gob. Lord! how art thou chang'd! How dost thou and thy master agree? I have brought him a present. How 'gree you now?

Laun. Well, well; but, for mine own part, as I have set up my rest[2] to run away, so I will not rest till I have run some ground. My master's a very Jew: give him a present! give him a halter: I am famish'd in his service; you may tell every finger I have with my ribs. Father, I am glad you are come: give me your present to one Master Bassanio, who, indeed, gives rare new liveries. If I serve not him, I will run as far as God has any ground.[3]—O rare fortune! here comes the man:—to him, father; for I am a Jew, if I serve the Jew any longer.

Enter BASSANIO, *with* LEONARDO, *and* Followers.

Bass. You may do so;—but let it be so hasted, that supper be ready at the farthest by five of the clock. See these letters delivered: put the liveries to making, and desire Gratiano to come anon to my lodging. [*Exit a* Servant.

Laun. To him, father.

Gob. God bless your worship!

Bass. Gramercy. Would'st thou aught with me?

Gob. Here's my son, sir, a poor boy,—

Laun. Not a poor boy, sir, but the rich Jew's man, that would, sir,—as my father shall specify.

Gob. He hath a great infection, sir, as one would say, to serve—

Laun. Indeed, the short and the long is, I serve the Jew, and have a desire,—as my father shall specify.

Gob. His master and he (saving your worship's reverence) are scarce cater-cousins.

Laun. To be brief, the very truth is, that the Jew having done me wrong, doth cause me,—as my father, being, I hope, an old man, shall frutify unto you.

Gob. I have here a dish of doves,[4] that I would bestow upon your worship; and my suit is,—

Laun. In very brief, the suit is impertinent[5] to myself, as your lordship shall know by this honest old man; and, though I say it, though old man, yet, poor man, my father.

Bass. One speak for both.—What would you?

Laun. Serve you, sir.

Gob. That is the very defect of the matter, sir.

Bass. I know thee well: thou hast obtain'd thy suit.
Shylock, thy master, spoke with me this day,
And hath preferr'd thee; if it be preferment,
To leave a rich Jew's service, to become
The follower of so poor a gentleman.

Laun. The old proverb[6] is very well parted between my master Shylock and you, sir: you have the grace of God, sir, and he hath enough.

Bass. Thou speak'st it well.—Go, father, with thy son.—
Take leave of thy old master, and inquire
My lodging out.—Give him a livery
[*To his* Followers.
More guarded[7] than his fellows'; see it done.

Laun. Father, in.—I cannot get a service,—no;—I have ne'er a tongue in my head.—[*Looks on his palm.*] Well, if any man in Italy have a fairer table,[8] which doth offer to swear upon a book![9]—I shall have good fortune.—Go to; here's a simple line of life! here's a small trifle of wives: alas! fifteen wives is nothing, aleven[10] widows, and nine maids, is a simple coming-in for one man; and then, to 'scape drowning thrice, and to be in peril of my life with the edge of a feather-bed:[11]—here are simple 'scapes! Well, if Fortune be a woman, she's a good wench for this gear.—Father, come; I'll take my leave of the Jew in the twinkling of an eye. [*Exeunt* LAUNCELOT *and Old* GOBBO.

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[1] *Phill-horse*—thill-horse, shaft-horse. *Phil* or *fill* is the term in all the midland counties,—*thill* would not be understood.—HARRIS.

[2] *Set up my rest*—determined.

[3] *I will run as far as God has any ground.*—To understand the appropriateness of these words, we must remember that in Venice it was not easy to find ground enough to run upon.—HUDSON.

[4] *A dish of doves.*—This was a common Italian present.

[5] *Impertinent.*—Launcelot means to say pertinent.

[6] *The old proverb.*—It is uncertain what proverb is here alluded to. White says, "from the text it would seem to have been, 'He who hath God's grace hath enough

[7] *Guarded*—ornamented.

[8] *Table.*—Table, in the language of fortune-tellers, is the palm of the hand.

[9] *Well, if any man in Italy have a fairer table, which doth offer to swear upon a book.*—The construction is, 'Well, if any man in Italy which doth offer to swear upon a book have a fairer table,'—the expression being of that pleonastic form (for 'any man') which is common among the uncultivated, as 'any man that breathes,' 'any man that walks on shoe leather,' &c., &c. After having thus admired the fairness of his 'table,' Launcelot breaks off to predict his good fortune.—WHITE.

[10] *Aleven.*—*Aleven* was a vulgarism for *eleven.*—WHITE.

[11] *In peril of my life with the edge of a feather-bed.*—A cant phrase to signify the danger of marrying.—WARBURTON.

Bass. I pray thee, good Leonardo, think on this.
These things being bought, and orderly bestow'd,
Return in haste; for I do feast to-night
My best esteem'd acquaintance; hie thee; go.
Leonardo. My best endeavours shall be done herein. [*Exeunt all but* LEONARDO.

Enter GRATIANO.

Gra. Where is your master?
Leon. Yonder, sir, he walks. [*Exit* LEONARDO.
Gra. Signior Bassanio!

Re-enter BASSANIO.

Bass. Gratiano.
Gra. I have a suit to you.
Bass You have obtain'd it.
Gra. You must not deny me. I must go with you to Belmont.
Bass. Why, then you must; but hear thee, Gratiano.
Thou art too wild, too rude, and bold of voice;—
Parts that become thee happily enough,
And in such eyes as ours appear not faults;
But where thou art not known, why, there they show
Something too liberal.[1]—Pray thee, take pain
To allay with some cold drops of modesty
Thy skipping spirit, lest through thy wild behaviour,
I be misconster'd[2] in the place I go to,
And lose my hopes.
Gra. Signior Bassanio, hear me:
If I do not put on a sober habit,
Talk with respect, and swear but now and then,
Wear prayer-books in my pocket, look demurely;
Nay, more, while grace is saying, hood mine eyes
Thus with my hat,[3] and sigh, and say Amen;
Use all the observance of civility,
Like one well studied in a sad ostent[4]
To please his grandam, never trust me more.
Bass. Well, we shall see your bearing.
Gra. Nay, but I bar to-night: you shall not gage me
By what we do to-night.
Bass. No, that were a pity
I would entreat you rather to put on
Your boldest suit of mirth; for we have friends
That purpose merriment. But fare you well,
I have some business.
Gra. And I must to Lorenzo, and the rest;
But we will visit you at supper-time. [*Exeunt.*

Enter JESSICA *and* LAUNCELOT.

Jessica. I am sorry thou wilt leave my father so:
Our house is Hell, and thou, a merry devil,
Didst rob it of some taste of tediousness.
But fare thee well; there is a ducat for thee.
And, Launcelot, soon at supper shalt thou see
Lorenzo, who is thy new master's guest;
Give him this letter; do it secretly;
And so farewell: I would not have my father
See me in talk with thee.
Laun. Adieu!—tears exhibit my tongue.—Most beautiful pagan,—most sweet Jew! If a Christian did not play the knave, and get[5] thee, I am much deceived: but, adieu! these foolish drops do somewhat drown my manly spirit: adieu! [*Exit.*
Jes. Farewell, good Launcelot.—
Alack, what heinous sin is it in me
To be asham'd to be my father's child!
But though I am a daughter to his blood,
I am not to his manners. O Lorenzo!
If thou keep promise, I shall end this strife,
Become a Christian, and thy loving wife. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—The same.—A Street.

Enter GRATIANO, LORENZO, SALARINO, *and* SALANIO.

Lor. Nay, we will slink away in supper-time,
Disguise us at my lodging, and return
All in an hour.
Gra. We have not made good preparation.
Salar. We have not spoke us yet of torch-bearers.[6]
Salan. 'Tis vile, unless it may be quaintly order'd,
And better, in my mind, not undertook.
Lor. 'Tis now but four o'clock: we have two hours
To furnish us.—

Enter LAUNCELOT, *with a Letter.*

Friend Launcelot, what's the news?
Laun. An it shall please you to break up this, it shall seem to signify. [*Giving the letter.*
Lor. I know the hand: in faith, 'tis a fair hand;
And whiter than the paper it writ on,
Is the fair hand that writ.
Gra. Love-news, in faith.
Laun. By your leave, sir.
Lor. Whither goest thou?
Laun. Marry, sir, to bid my old master the Jew, to sup to-night with my new master, the Christian.
Lor. Hold here, take this.—Tell gentle Jessica I will not fail her:—speak it privately;
Go.— [*Exit* LAUNCELOT.
Gentlemen,
Will you prepare you for this masque to-night?
I am provided of a torch-bearer.
Salar. Ay, marry, I'll be gone about it straight.

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[1] *Liberal*—coarse.
[2] *Misconster'd*—misconstrued.
[3] —— *while grace is saying, hood mine eyes Thus with my hat.*
It was formerly the custom to wear the hat at meals.
[4] *Ostent*—appearance.
[5] *Get*—beget.
[6] *Not spoke us yet of torch-bearers*—not yet bespoken torch-bearers.

. And so will I.
Meet me, and Gratiano,
iano's lodging some hour hence.
. 'Tis good we do so.
[*Exeunt* SALARINO *and* SALANIO.
Was not that letter from fair Jessica?
I must needs tell thee all. She hath
lirected
shall take her from her father's house;
old, and jewels, she is furnish'd with;
age's suit she hath in readiness.
he Jew her father come to Heaven,
e for his gentle daughter's sake;
ver dare misfortune cross her foot,
she do it under this excuse,
e is issue to a faithless Jew.
;o with me: peruse this as thou goest.
ssica shall be my torch-bearer [*Exeunt.*

III.—The same.—Before SHYLOCK'S House.

Enter SHYLOCK *and* LAUNCELOT.

Well, thou shalt see; thy eyes shall be
hy judge,
erence of old Shylock and Bassanio.—
Jessica!—thou shalt not gormandize,
hast done with me,—What, Jessica!—
ep and snore, and rend apparel out.—
essica, I say!

Laun. Why, Je
Shy. Who bids thee call?
call.
Laun. Your worship was w
could do nothing without biddi

Enter JESSICA.

Jes. Call you? What is you
Shy. I am bid forth to suppe
There are my keys.—But wherei
I am not bid for love; they flat
But yet I'll go in hate, to feed u
The prodigal Christian.—Jessica
Look to my house:—I am right
There is some ill a-brewing tow
For I did dream of money-bags
Laun. I beseech you, sir, go: m
doth expect your reproach.
Shy. So do I his.
Laun. And they have conspir
will not say you shall see a mas
do, then it was not for nothing t
a bleeding on Black Monday last
i'th' morning, falling out that
Wednesday was four year in th'
Shy. What! are there masqu
me, Jessica:
Lock up my doors; and when you
And the vile squealing of the wr
Clamber not you up to the casem

---

nose fell a bleeding on Black Monday last.—Bleeding at the nose was formerly thou
Chronicler, says Black Monday got its name from the following

Nor thrust your head into the public street
To gaze on Christian fools with varnish'd faces;
But stop my house's ears, I mean my casements:
Let not the sound of shallow foppery enter
My sober house.—By Jacob's staff, I swear,
I have no mind of feasting forth to-night;
But I will go.—Go you before me, sirrah:
Say I will come.

Laun. I will go before, sir.—Mistress, look out at window, for all this;
There will come a Christian by,
Will be worth a Jewes[1] eye.[2] [*Exit.*

Shy. What says that fool of Hagar's offspring? ha!

Jes. His words were, Farewell, Mistress; nothing else.

Shy. The patch[3] is kind enough; but a huge feeder,
Snail-slow in profit, and he sleeps by day
More than the wild cat: drones hive not with me;
Therefore I part with him, and part with him
To one that I would have him help to waste
His borrow'd purse.—Well, Jessica, go in:
Perhaps I will return immediately.
Do as I bid you; shut doors after you:
'Fast bind, fast find.'
A proverb never stale in thrifty mind. [*Exit.*

Jes. Farewell; and if my fortune be not cross'd,
I have a father, you a daughter, lost. [*Exit.*

Enter GRATIANO *and* SALARINO, *masqued.*

Gra. This is the pent-house, under which Lorenzo
Desired us to make a stand.

Salar. His hour
Is almost past.

Gra. And it is marvel he out-dwells his hour,
For lovers ever run before the clock.

Salar. O! ten times faster Venus' pigeons[4] fly
To seal love's bonds new-made, than they are wont
To keep obliged faith unforfeited!

Gra. That ever holds: who riseth from a feast
With that keen appetite that he sits down?
Where is the horse that doth untread again
His tedious measures with the unbated fire
That he did pace them first? All things that are,
Are with more spirit chased than enjoy'd.
How like a younger,[5] or a prodigal,
The scarfed bark[6] puts from her native bay.
Hugg'd and embraced by the strumpet wind!
How like the prodigal doth she return;
With over-weather'd ribs, and ragged sails,
Lean, rent, and beggar'd by the strumpet wind!

Salar. Here comes Lorenzo:—more of this hereafter.

Enter LORENZO.

Lor. Sweet friends, your patience for my long abode;
Not I, but my affairs have made you wait:
When you shall please to play the thieves for wives,
I'll watch as long for you then.—Approach;
Here dwells my father Jew.

SONG.

Hark! hark![7] the lark at heaven's gate sings,
And Phœbus 'gins arise,
His steeds to water at those springs
On chalic'd flowers that lies;
And winking Mary-buds begin to ope their golden eyes;
With every thing that pretty is, my lady sweet, arise;
Arise, Arise!

JESSICA *at the Window, in boy's clothes.*

Jes. Who are you? Tell me for more certainty;
Albeit I'll swear that I do know your tongue.

Lor. Lorenzo, and thy love.

Jes. Lorenzo, certain; and my love, indeed,
For whom love I so much? And now who knows,
But you, Lorenzo, whether I am yours?

Lor. Heaven and thy thoughts are witness that thou art.

Jes. Here, catch this casket: it is worth the pains.
I am glad 'tis night, you do not look on me,
For I am much asham'd of my exchange;
But love is blind, and lovers cannot see
The pretty follies that themselves commit;
For if they could, Cupid himself would blush
To see me thus transformed to a boy.

Lor. Descend, for you must be my torch-bearer.

Jes. What! must I hold a candle to my shames?
They in themselves, good sooth, are too-too[8] light.
Why, 'tis an office of discovery, love,
And I should be obscur'd.

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[1] *Jewes*—Jews. The term Jew was anciently applied to Hebrews of both sexes. The old Saxon genitive form is here used for the sake of rhythm.

[2] *Will be worth a Jewes eye.*—White says, this is an allusion to the "enormous sums extorted by the *Front-de-bœufs* of old from Jews, as ransom for their eyes."

[3] *Patch.*—The domestic fool was sometimes called a patch; and it is probable that this class was thus named from the patched dress of their vocation. The usurper in 'Hamlet,' the "vice of kings," was "a king of shreds and patches." It is probable, that in this way the word patch came to be an expression of contempt, as in 'A Midsummer-Night's Dream,'—

"A crew of patches, rude mechanicals."

Shylock here uses the word in this sense; just as we say still, *cross-patch.*—KNIGHT.

[4] *Venus' pigeons.*—Venus' pigeons, I apprehend, means the doves by which her chariot is drawn.—BOSWELL.

[5] *Younger*—youngling.

[6] *The scarfed bark*—the vessel decorated with flags.—STEEVENS.

[7] *Hark! hark! &c.*—This beautiful song is transferred from "Cymbeline." It was customary, even in Shakespeare's time, to introduce a song in this place, as the old 'prompt-book' shows.

[8] *Too-too.*—This is an old intensive form of *too.*

Lor. So are you, sweet,
Even in the lovely garnish of a boy.
But come at once;
For the close night doth play the run-away
And we are stay'd for at Bassanio's feast.
Jes. I will make fast the doors, and gild myself
With some more ducats, and be with you straight.
[*Exit, from the Window.*
Gra. Now, by my hood,[1] a Gentile, and no Jew.[2]
Lor. Beshrew me, but I love her heartily;
For she is wise, if I can judge of her;
And fair she is, if that mine eyes be true;
And true she is, as she hath prov'd herself;
And therefore, like herself, wise, fair, and true,
Shall she be placed in my constant soul.

Enter JESSICA.

What, art thou come?—On, gentlemen; away!
Our masquing mates by this time for us stay.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—Belmont.—An Apartment in PORTIA'S House.

Flourish of Cornets. The PRINCE *of* ARRAGON, PORTIA, *and their* Attendants *discovered.*

Por. Behold, there stand the caskets, noble Prince:
If you choose that wherein I am contain'd.
Straight shall our nuptial rites be solemniz'd;
But if you fail, without more speech, my lord,
You must be gone from hence immediately.
Arragon. I am enjoin'd by oath to observe three things:
First, never to unfold to any one
Which casket 'twas I chose: next, if I fail
Of the right casket, never in my life
To woo a maid in way of marriage:
Lastly, if I do fail in fortune of my choice,
Immediately to leave you and be gone.
Por. To these injunctions every one doth swear,
That comes to hazard for my worthless self.
Ar. And so have I address'd[3] me: Fortune now
To my heart's hope!—Gold, silver, and base lead.
Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath:
You shall look fairer, ere I give, or hazard.
What says the golden chest? ha! let me see:—
Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire.
What many men desire:—that many may be meant
By[4] the fool multitude, that choose by show,
Not learning more than the fond eye doth teach;
Which pries not to th' interior, but, like the martlet,
Builds in the weather, on the outward wall,
Even in the force[5] and road of casualty.
I will not choose what many men desire,
Because I will not jump[6] with common spirits,
And rank me with the barbarous multitudes.
Why, then to thee, thou silver treasure-house;
Tell me once more what title thou dost bear:
Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves;
And well said too; for who shall go about
To cozen Fortune, and be honourable,
Without the stamp of merit? Let none presume
To wear an undeserved dignity.
Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves.
I will assume desert:—Give me a key for this,
And instantly unlock my fortunes here.
Por. Too long a pause for that which you find there.
Ar. What's here? the portrait of a blinking idiot,
Presenting me a schedule? I will read it.
How much unlike art thou to Portia!
How much unlike my hopes, and my deservings!
Who chooseth me shall have as much as he deserves.
Did I deserve no more than a fool's head?
Is that my prize? are my deserts no better?
Por. To offend, and judge, are distinct offices,
And of opposed natures.
Ar. What is here?

"*The fire seven times tried this:*
Seven times tried that judgment is,
That did never choose amiss.
Some there be that shadows kiss;
Such have but a shadow's bliss.
There be fools alive, I wis,
Silver'd o'er; and so was this."

Still more fool I shall appear
By the time I linger here:
With one fool's head I came to woo;
But I go away with two.—
Sweet, adieu. I'll keep my oath,
Patiently to bear my wroth.[7]
[*Exeunt* ARRAGON *and his* Attendants.
Por. Thus hath the candle sing'd the moth.
O, these deliberate fools, when they do choose,
They have the wisdom by their wit to lose.
Ner. The ancient saying is no heresy:—
Hanging and wiving goes by destiny.

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[1] *Now, by my hood.*—Malone and Steevens suppose Gratiano to swear by the hood of his masquing dress—a very strange thing to swear by. They may be right. But I had always understood the ancient oath by my hood,' here and elsewhere to be, 'by my self,' *i. e.*, 'by my estate'—manhood, kinghood, knighthood, or whatever the hood or estate of the protester might be.—WHITE.

[2] *A Gentile and no Jew.*—A jest arising from the ambiguity of 'Gentile,' which signifies both a heathen and one well born.—JOHNSON.

[3] *Address'd*—prepared. [4] *By*—for. [5] *Force*—power. [6] *Jump*—agree. [7] *Wroth*—misfortune.

Enter BALTHAZAR.

Bal. Where is my lady?
Por. Here; what would my lord?[1]
Bal. Madam, there is alighted at your gate
A young Venetian, one that comes before
To signify th' approaching of his lord,
From whom he bringeth sensible re-greets;[2]
To wit, (besides commends, and courteous breath,)
Gifts of rich value; yet I have not seen
So likely an embassador of love.
A day in April never came so sweet,
To show how costly Summer was at hand,
As this fore-spurrer comes before his lord.
Por. No more, I pray thee: I am half afeard
Thou wilt say anon he is some kin to thee,
Thou spend'st such high-day wit in praising him.—
Come, come, Nerissa; for I long to see
Quick Cupid's post, that comes so mannerly.
Ner. Bassanio, lord Love, if thy will it be!
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—Venice.—A Street.

Enter SALARINO *and* SALANIO.

Salar. Why, man, I saw Bassanio under sail:
With him is Gratiano gone along;
And in their ship, I am sure, Lorenzo is not.
Salan. The villain Jew with outcries rais'd the Duke,
Who went with him to search Bassanio's ship.
Salar. He came too late, the ship was under sail:
But there the Duke was given to understand,
That in a gondola were seen together
Lorenzo and his amorous Jessica.
Besides, Antonio certified the Duke,
They were not with Bassanio in his ship.
Salan. I never heard a passion so confus'd,
So strange, outrageous, and so variable,
As the dog Jew did utter in the streets:
"My daughter!—O my ducats!—O my daughter!
Fled with a Christian?—O my Christian ducats!
Justice! the law! my ducats, and my daughter!
A sealed bag, two sealed bags of ducats,
Of double ducats, stol'n from me by my daughter!"
Let good Antonio look he keep his day,
Or he shall pay for this.
Salar. Marry, well remember'd.
I reason'd[3] with a Frenchman yesterday,
Who told me, in the narrow seas that part
The French and English, there miscarried
A vessel of our country, richly fraught.
I thought upon Antonio when he told me,
And wish'd in silence that it were not his.
Salan. You were best to tell Antonio what you hear;
Yet do not suddenly, for it may grieve him.
Salar. A kinder gentleman treads not the earth.
I saw Bassanio and Antonio part.
Bassanio told him he would make some speed
Of his return: he answer'd—"Do not so;
Slubber[4] not business for my sake, Bassanio,
But stay the very riping of the time.
And for the Jew's bond, which he hath of me,
Let it not enter in your mind of love.[5]
Be merry and employ your chiefest thoughts
To courtship, and such fair ostents of love
As shall conveniently become you there."
And even there, his eye being big with tears,
Turning his face, he put his hand behind him,
And, with affection wondrous sensible,
He wrung Bassanio's hand; and so they parted.
Salan. I think he only loves the world for him.
I pray thee let us go, and find him out,
And quicken his embraced heaviness[6]
With some delight or other.
Salar. Do we so. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—Genoa.—A Garden.

Enter LAUNCELOT *and* JESSICA.

Laun. Yes, truly; for, look you, the sins of the father are to be laid upon the children; therefore, I promise you, I fear you.[7] I was always plain with you, and so now I speak my agitation of the matter: therefore, be of good cheer, for, truly, I think, you are damn'd. There is but one hope in it that can do you any good.
Jes. And what hope is that, I pray thee?
Laun. Marry, you may partly hope that you are not the Jew's daughter.
Jes. So the sins of my mother should be visited upon me.
Laun. Truly, then, I fear you are damned both by father and mother: thus when I shun Scylla, your father, I fall into Charybdis,[8] your mother. Well, you are gone both ways.
Jes. I shall be sav'd by my husband; he hath made me a Christian.
Laun. Truly, the more to blame he: we were Christians enow before; e'en as many as could well live one by another. This making of Christians will raise the price of hogs; if we grow all to be pork-eaters, we shall not shortly have a rasher on the coals for money.
Jes. I'll tell my husband, Launcelot, what you say: here he comes.

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[1] *What would my lord?*—A sportive rejoinder to the abrupt exclamation of the messenger.—DYCE.
[2] *Re-greets*—salutations. [3] *Reason'd*—discours'd. [4] *Slubber*—slight, neglect.
[5] *Your mind of love.*—'Your mind of love,' in the phraseology of the time, is equivalent to your loving mind.—HALLIWELL.
[6] *Embraced heaviness.*—The heaviness which he indulges, and is found of.—EDWARDS.
[7] *I fear you*—I fear for you. So in "Richard III:"

"The king is sickly, weak, and melancholy,
And his physicians *fear* him mightily."

[8] *Scylla* * * * *Charybdis.*—It is hardly necessary to say that these names were applied by the ancients, to the rocky shores of the strait that separates Sicily from Italy, the passage of which was greatly dreaded by mariners.

Enter LORENZO.

Lor. I shall grow jealous of you, shortly, Launcelot, if you thus get my wife into corners.

Jes. Nay, you need not fear us, Lorenzo: Launcelot and I are out. He tells me flatly, there is no mercy for me in Heaven, because I am a Jew's daughter; and he says, you are no good member of the commonwealth, for in converting Jews to Christians you raise the price of pork.

Lor. I shall answer that to the commonwealth.—
Go in, sirrah: bid them prepare for dinner.

Laun. That is done, sir; they have all stomachs.

Lor. Goodly lord, what a wit-snapper are you! then, bid them prepare dinner.

Laun. That is done too, sir, only, cover is the word.

Lor. Will you cover then, sir?

Laun. Not so, sir, neither; I know my duty.

Lor. Yet more quarrelling with occasion? Wilt thou show the whole wealth of thy wit in an instant? I pray thee, understand a plain man in his plain meaning: go to thy fellows, bid them cover the table, serve in the meat, and we will come in to dinner.

Laun. For the table, sir, it shall be serv'd in; for the meat, sir, it shall be covered; for your coming in to dinner, sir, why, let it be as humours and conceits shall govern. [*Exit* LAUNCELOT.

Lor. O, dear discretion, how his words are suited![1]
The fool hath planted in his memory
An army of good words; and I do know[2]
A many fools, that stand in better place,
Garnish'd like him, that for a tricksy word
Defy the matter.—Let us go to dinner. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—Venice.—A Street.

Enter SALANIO *and* SALARINO.

Sa'an. Now, what news on the Rialto?

Salar Why, yet it lives there uncheck'd, that Antonio hath a ship of rich lading wreck'd on the narrow seas; the Goodwins,[3] I think they call the place: a very dangerous flat, and fatal, where the carcases of many a tall ship lie buried, as they say, if my gossip, report, be an honest woman of her word.

Salan. I would she were as lying a gossip in that, as ever knapp'd ginger,[4] or made her neighbours believe she wept for the death of a third husband. But it is true, without any slips of prolixity, or crossing the plain high-way of talk, that the good Antonio, the honest Antonio,—O, that I had a title good enough to keep his name company!—

Salar. Come, the full stop.

Salan. Ha!—what say'st thou?—Why, the end is, he hath lost a ship.

Salar. I would it might prove the end of his losses.

Salan. Let me say Amen betimes, lest the Devil cross my prayer; for here he comes in the likeness of a Jew.—How now, Shylock? what news among the merchants?

Enter SHYLOCK.

Shy. You knew, none so well, none so well as you, of my daughter's flight.

Salar. That's certain: I, for my part, knew the tailor that made the wings she flew withal.

Salan. And Shylock, for his own part, knew the bird was fledg'd; and then, it is the complexion of them all to leave the dam.

Shy. She is damn'd for it.

Salar. That's certain, if the Devil may be her judge.

Shy. My own flesh and blood to rebel!

Salar. But tell us, do you hear whether Antonio have had any loss at sea or no?

Shy. There I have another bad match: a bankrupt, a prodigal, who dare scarce show his head on the Rialto;—a beggar, that us'd to come so smug upon the mart.—Let him look to his bond: he was wont to call me usurer;—let him look to his bond: he was wont to lend money for a Christian courtesy;—let him look to his bond.

Salar. Why, I am sure, if he forfeit, thou wilt not take his flesh: what's that good for?

Shy. To bait fish withal: if it will feed nothing else, it will feed my revenge. He hath disgrac'd me, and hinder'd me half a million; laugh'd at my losses, mock'd at my gains, scorned my nation, thwarted my bargains, cooled my friends, heated mine enemies; and what's his reason? I am a Jew. Hath not a Jew eyes? hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions? fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same Winter and Summer, as a Christian is? If you prick us, do we not bleed? if you tickle us, do we not laugh? if you poison us, do we not die? and if you wrong us, shall we not revenge? If we are like you in the rest, we will resemble you in that. If a Jew wrong a Christian, what

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[1] *Suited.*—Suited means united to each other, arranged.—BOSWELL.

[2] *And I do know*, &c.—Probably an allusion to the habit of wit-snapping, the constant straining to speak out of the common way, which then filled the highest places of learning and of the State.—HUDSON.

[3] *The Goodwins.*—The popular notion of the Goodwin Sand was, not only that it was "a very dangerous flat and fatal," but that it possessed a "voracious and ingurgitating property; so that, should a ship of the largest size strike on it, in a few days it would be so wholly swallowed up by these quick-sands, that no part of it would be left to be seen."—KNIGHT.

[4] *Knapp'd ginger.*—'Knap' is plainly the same word as 'snap': "—— he hath broken the bowe, he hath knapped the spear in sonder, and brent the charrets in the fyre."—(Psalm xlv. Miles Coverdale's translation, 1535.) As ginger itself is a tough root, a ginger cake must be meant, and probably the sort called even now, 'ginger snap.'—WHITE.

is his humility? revenge. If a Christian wrong a Jew, what should his sufferance be by Christian example? why, revenge. The villainy you teach me, I will execute; and it shall go hard but I will better the instruction.

Salan. Here comes another of the tribe: a third cannot be match'd, unless the Devil himself turn Jew. [*Exeunt* SALANIO *and* SALARINO.

Enter TUBAL.

Shy. How now, Tubal, what news from Genoa? hast thou found my daughter?

Tubal. I often came where I did hear of her, but cannot find her.

Shy. Why, there! there, there, there! a diamond gone, cost me two thousand ducats in Frankfort. The curse never fell upon our nation till now:—I never felt it till now:—two thousand ducats in that: and other precious, precious jewels.—I would, my daughter were dead at my foot, and the jewels in her ear! would she were hears'd at my foot, and the ducats in her coffin! No news of them?—Why, so;—and I know not what's spent in the search: Why then—loss upon loss! the thief gone with so much, and so much, to find the thief, and no satisfaction, no revenge; nor no ill luck stirring, but what lights o' my shoulders; no sighs, but o' my breathing; no tears, but o' my shedding.

Tub. Yes, other men have ill luck too; Antonio, as I heard in Genoa,—

Shy. What, what, what? ill luck, ill luck?

Tub. —hath an argosy cast away, coming from Tripolis.

Shy. I thank God! I thank God! Is it true? is it true?

Tub. I spoke with some of the sailors that escaped the wreck.

Shy. I thank thee, good Tubal.—Good news, good news! ha! ha!—Where? in Genoa?

Tub. Your daughter spent in Genoa, as I heard, one night, fourscore ducats.

Shy. Thou stick'st a dagger in me. I shall never see my gold again. Fourscore ducats at a sitting! fourscore ducats!

Tub. There came divers of Antonio's creditors in my company to Venice, that swear he cannot choose but break.

Shy. I am very glad of it. I'll plague him; I'll torture him: I am glad of it.

Tub. One of them showed me a ring, that he had of your daughter for a monkey.

Shy. Out upon her! Thou torturest me, Tubal; it was my turquoise:[1] I had it of Leah, when I was a bachelor: I would not have given it for a wilderness of monkies.[2]

Tub. But Antonio is certainly undone.

Shy. Nay, that's true, that's very true: Go, Tubal, fee me an officer; bespeak him a fortnight before. I will have the heart of him if he forfeit; for were he out of Venice, I can make what merchandize I will. Go, Tubal, and meet me at our synagogue: go, good Tubal; at our synagogue, Tubal. [*Exeunt.*

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[1] *Turquoise.*—A turquoise is a precious stone, found in the veins of the mountains on the confines of Persia, to the east, subject to the Tartars.—STEEVENS.

The turquoise is, in itself, a jewel of no very great value. Shylock treasured it as a maiden gift from his dead wife, Leah. Steevens mentions many superstitious qualities imputed to this stone.

[2] *A wilderness of monkeys.*—What a fine Hebraism is implied in this expression.—HAZLITT.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—Belmont.—An Apartment in PORTIA'S House.

BASSANIO, PORTIA, GRATIANO, NERISSA, *and their* Attendants, *discovered. The Caskets are set out.*

Por. I pray you tarry: pause a day or two,
Before you hazard; for, in choosing wrong,
I lose your company: therefore, forbear a while.
There's something tells me, (but it is not love,)
I would not lose you; and you know yourself
Hate counsels not in such a quality.
But lest you should not understand me well,
(And yet a maiden hath no tongue but thought,)
I would detain you here some month or two,
Before you venture for me. I could teach you
How to choose right, but then I am forsworn;
So will I never be: so may you miss me;
But if you do, you'll make me wish a sin,—
That I had been forsworn.—
I speak too long; but 'tis to peize[1] the time,
To eke it, and to draw it out in length,
To stay you from election.

Bass. Let me choose;
For, as I am, I live upon the rack.

Por. Upon the rack, Bassanio? then confess
What treason there is mingled with your love.

Bass. None, but that ugly treason of mistrust,
Which makes me fear th' enjoying of my love.
There may as well be amity and life
'Tween snow and fire, as treason and my love.
But let me to my fortune and the caskets.

Por. Away then. I am lock'd in one of them:
If you do love me, you will find me out.—
Nerissa, and the rest, stand all aloof.—
Let music sound, while he doth make his choice;
Then, if he lose, he makes a swan-like end,[2]
Fading in music: that the comparison
May stand more proper, my eye shall be the stream,
And watery death-bed for him. Now he goes,
With no less presence,[3] but with much more love,
Than young Alcides, when he did redeem
The virgin tribute paid by howling Troy
To the sea-monster: I stand for sacrifice:
The rest aloof are the Dardanian wives,
With bleared visages, come forth to view
The issue of th' exploit. Go, Hercules!
Live thou, I live.—With much more dismay
I view the fight, than thou that mak'st the fray.

A Song, whilst BASSANIO *comments on the caskets to himself.*

SONG.

Tell me, where is fancy[4] *bred,*
Or in the heart, or in the head?
How begot, how nourished?
Reply, reply.

It is engender'd in the eyes,
With gazing fed; and fancy dies
In the cradle where it lies.
Let us all ring fancy's knell;
I'll begin it,—Ding, dong, bell.
All. *Ding, dong, bell.*

Bass. So may the outward shows[5] be least themselves:
The world is still deceiv'd with ornament.
In law, what plea so tainted and corrupt,
But, being season'd with a gracious[6] voice,
Obscures the show of evil? In religion,
What damned error, but some sober brow
Will bless it, and approve it with a text,
Hiding the grossness with fair ornament?
There is no vice so simple, but assumes
Some mark of virtue on his outward parts.
Thus ornament is but the guiled[7] shore
To a most dangerous sea, the beauteous scarf
Veiling an Indian beauty:—in a word,
The seeming truth which cunning times put on
To entrap the wisest. Therefore, thou gaudy gold,
Hard food for Midas, I will none of thee.
Nor none of thee, thou pale and common drudge
'Tween man and man: but thou, thou meagre lead
Which rather threat'nest than dost promise aught,
Thy plainness moves me more than eloquence;
And here choose I. Joy be the consequence!

---

[1] *Peize.*—To *peize*, is to weigh, or balance; and figuratively, *to keep in* suspense, to delay.—HENLEY.

[2] *A swan-like end.*—Alluding to the opinion which long prevailed, that the swan uttered a plaintive musical sound at the approach of death. There is something so touching in this superstition that one feels loth to be undeceived.—HUDSON.

[3] *With no less presence*—with the same dignity of mien.—JOHNSON.

Now he goes,
With no less presence, &c.

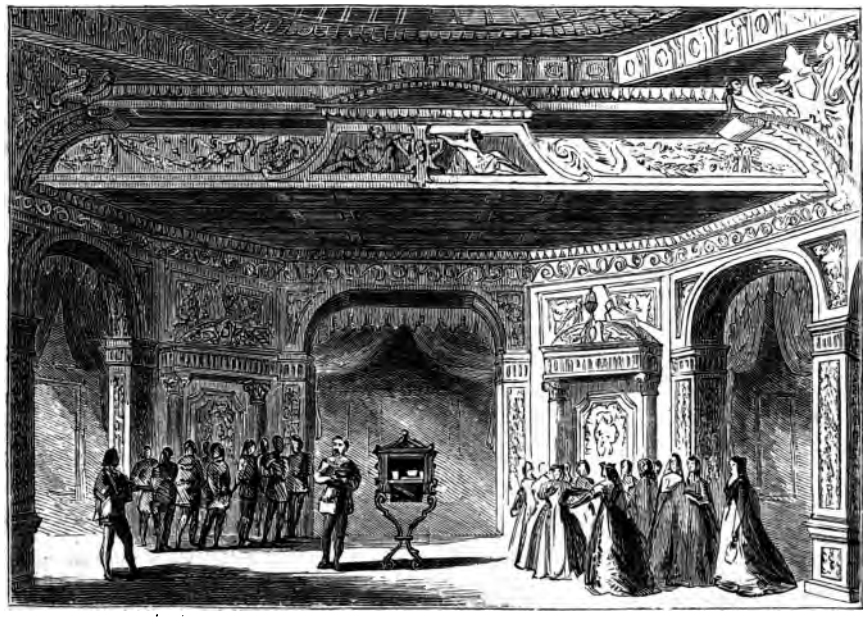
Laomedon, the founder of Troy, hired Neptune to build the walls, and Apollo, meantime, to keep his flocks on Mount Ida. The gods having finished their tasks, Laomedon refuses their wages. Neptune, enraged, sends a sea-monster to ravage the country about Troy. The Trojans, by command of an oracle, sacrifice from time to time a maiden to the monster, to appease him and his offended master. Among others, Hesione, daughter of Laomedon, is selected by lot for this purpose. But at this time Hercules, or Alcides (the patronymic), returning from his expedition against the Amazons, slays the monster and rescues the maiden. Such is the myth to which the poet alludes.

[4] *Fancy.*—The poet, in common with other writers of the time, often uses *fancy* for *love*.—HUDSON.

[5] *So may the outward shows,* &c.—Bassanio has made up his mind whilst the music has proceeded, and then follows out the course of his thoughts in words.—KNIGHT.

[6] *Gracious*—pleasing.

[7] *Guiled*—deceiving.



Por. How all the other passions fleet to air,
As doubtful thoughts, and rash-embrac'd despair,
And shuddering fear and green-ey'd jealousy.
O love! be moderate; allay thy ecstasy;
In measure rain thy joy;[1] scant this excess:
I feel too much thy blessing; make it less,
For fear I surfeit!

Bass. What find I here?
[*Opening the leaden casket.*
Fair Portia's counterfeit![2] What demi-god
Hath come so near creation? Move these eyes?
Or whether, riding on the balls of mine,
Seem they in motion? Here are sever'd lips,
Parted with sugar breath; so sweet a bar
Should sunder such sweet friends. Here, in her hairs,
The painter plays the spider, and hath woven
A golden mesh t' entrap the hearts of men,
Faster than gnats in cobwebs; but her eyes!—
How could he see to do them? having made one,
Methinks, it should have power to steal both his,
And leave itself unfurnish'd.[3] yet look, how far
The substance of my praise doth wrong this shadow
In underprizing it, so far this shadow
Doth limp behind the substance.—Here's the scroll,
The continent and summary of my fortune.

"*You that choose not by the view,*
Chance as fair, and choose as true!
Since this fortune falls to you,
Be content and seek no new.
If you be well pleas'd with this,
And hold your fortune for your bliss,
Turn you where your lady is,
And claim her with a loving kiss."

A gentle scroll.—Fair lady, by your leave;
I come by note, to give, and to receive.
[*Kissing her.*
Like one of two contending in a prize,
That thinks he hath done well in people's eyes,
Hearing applause, and universal shout,
Giddy in spirit, still gazing, in a doubt
Whether those peals of praise be his or no;
So, thrice fair lady, stand I, even so,
As doubtful whether what I see be true,
Until confirm'd, sign'd, ratified by you.

Por. You see me, lord Bassanio, where I stand,
Such as I am: though, for myself alone,
I would not be ambitious in my wish,
To wish myself much better; yet for you
I would be trebled twenty times myself,
A thousand times more fair, ten thousand times more rich,
That only to stand high in your account,
I might in virtues, beauties, livings, friends,
Exceed account: but the full sum of me
Is sum of nothing; which, to term in gross,
Is an unlesson'd girl, unschool'd, unpractis'd:

---

[1] *Rain thy joy.*—I believe Shakespeare alluded to the well known proverb, *it cannot rain, but it pours.*—STEEVENS.

[2] *Counterfeit*—likeness. Hamlet calls the pictures of his father and uncle "the counterfeit presentment of two brothers."

[3] *Unfurnish'd*—incomplete, *not* furnished with its companion or fellow eye.—M. MASON.

Happy in this, she is not yet so old
But she may learn; happier than this,
She is not bred so dull but she can learn;
Happiest of all in that her gentle spirit
Commits itself to yours to be directed,
As from her lord, her governor, her king.
Bass. Madam, you have bereft me of all words.
Ner. My lord and lady, it is now our time,
That have stood by, and seen our wishes prosper,
To cry, good joy. Good joy, my lord, and lady!
Gra. My lord Bassanio, and my gentle lady,
I wish you all the joy that you can wish;
For, I am sure, you can wish none from me:[1]
And, when your honours mean to solemnize
The bargain of your faith, I do beseech you,
Even at that time I may be married too.
Bass. With all my heart, so thou canst get a wife.
Gra. I thank your lordship, you have got me one.
My eyes, my lord, can look as swift as yours:
You saw the mistress, I beheld the maid;[2]
You lov'd, I lov'd; for intermission[3]
No more pertains to me, my lord, than you.
Your fortune stood upon the caskets there,
And so did mine, too, as the matter falls;
For wooing here, until I sweat again,
And swearing, till my very roof was dry
With oaths of love, at last, if promise last,
I got a promise of this fair one here,
To have her love, provided that your fortune
Achiev'd her mistress.
Por. Is this true, Nerissa?
Ner. Madam, it is, so you stand pleas'd withal.
Bass. And do you, Gratiano, mean good faith?
Gra. Yes, 'faith, my lord.
Bass. Our feast shall be much honour'd in your marriage.
Gra. But who comes here? Lorenzo, and his infidel?
What! and my old Venetian friend, Salerio?

Enter LORENZO, JESSICA, *and* SALERIO.

Bass. Lorenzo, and Salerio, welcome hither,
If that the youth of my new interest here
Have power to bid you welcome.—By your leave
I bid my very friends and countrymen,
Sweet Portia, welcome.
Por So do I, my lord:
They are entirely welcome.
Lor. I thank your honour.—For my part, my lord,
My purpose was not to have seen you here;
But meeting with Salerio by the way
He did entreat me, past all saying nay,
To come with him along.
Sale. I did, my lord,
And I have reason for it. Signior Antonio
Commends him to you. [*Gives* BASSANIO *a letter.*
Bass Ere I ope his letter,
I pray you, tell me how my good friend doth.
Sale. Not sick, my lord, unless it be in mind;
Nor well, unless in mind; his letter, there,
Will show you his estate.
Gra. Nerissa, cheer yon stranger; bid her welcome.
Your hand, Salerio: what's the news from Venice?
How doth that royal merchant, good Antonio?
I know, he will be glad of our success;
We are the Jasons, we have won the fleece.
Sale. I would you had won the fleece that he hath lost!
Por. There are some shrewd[4] contents in yon same paper,
That steal the colour from Bassanio's cheek:
Some dear friend dead; else nothing in the world
Could turn so much the constitution
Of any constant man. What, worse and worse?—
With leave, Bassanio; I am half yourself,
And I must freely have the half of any thing
That this same paper brings you.
Bass. O sweet Portia!
Here are a few of the unpleasant'st words
That ever blotted paper. Gentle lady,
When I did first impart my love to you,
I freely told you all the wealth I had
Ran in my veins—I was a gentleman:
And then I told you true; and yet, dear lady,
Rating myself at nothing, you shall see
How much I was a braggart. When I told you
My state was nothing, I should then have told you
That I was worse than nothing; for, indeed,
I have engag'd myself to a dear friend,
Engag'd my friend to his mere enemy,
To feed my means. Here is a letter, lady;
The paper as the body[5] of my friend,
And every word in it a gaping wound,
Issuing life-blood.—But is it true, Salerio?
Have all his ventures fail'd? What, not one hit?
From Tripolis, from Mexico, and England,
From Lisbon, Barbary, and India,
And not one vessel 'scape the dreadful touch
Of merchant-marring rocks?
Sale. Not one, my lord.
Besides, it should appear, that if he had
The present money to discharge the Jew,
He would not take it. Never did I know
A creature, that did bear the shape of man,

---

[1] *You can wish none from me.*—That is, none away from me; none that I shall lose, if you gain it.—JOHNSON.

[2] *The maid.*—Nerissa was no servant-maid, according to modern notions, but an attendant friend, as well born and bred, perhaps, though not as wealthy, as Portia herself. Such a relation was common of old. It existed between Gratiano and Bassanio, whose intercourse is that of equals, and the former of whom is evidently a gentleman in every sense of the word. Bassanio says to him and Nerissa, "Our feast shall be *much honour'd* in your marriage."—WHITE.

[3] *Intermission*—pause, delay.

[4] *Shrewd*—cutting, harrowing.

[5] *The paper as the body.*—The expression is somewhat elliptical. "The paper as the body," means,—the paper resembles the body, is as the body.—STEEVENS.

So keen and greedy to confound a man.
He plies the Duke at morning, and at night,
And doth impeach the freedom of the State,
If they deny him justice. Twenty merchants,
The Duke himself, and the magnificoes
Of greatest port, have all persuaded with him;
But none can drive him from the envious plea
Of forfeiture, of justice, and his bond.

Por. Is it your dear friend that is thus in trouble?

Bass. The dearest friend to me, the kindest man,
The best condition'd and unwearied spirit
In doing courtesies; and one in whom
The ancient Roman honour more appears
Than any that draws breath in Italy.

Por. What sum owes he the Jew?

Bass. For me, three thousand ducats.

Por. What, no more?
Pay him six thousand, and deface the bond:
Double six thousand, and then treble that,[1]
Before a friend of this description
Shall lose a hair through Bassanio's fault.
First go with me to church, and call me wife,
And then away to Venice to your friend;
For never shall you lie by Portia's side
With an unquiet soul. You shall have gold
To pay the petty debt twenty times over.
My maid Nerissa and myself, mean time,
Will live as maids and widows. Come, away!
For you shall hence upon your wedding-day.
Bid your friends welcome, show a merry cheer;[2]
Since you are dear bought, I will love you dear,—
But let me hear the letter of your friend.

Bass. [Reads.] "*Sweet Bassanio, my ships have all miscarried, my creditors grow cruel, my estate is very low, my bond to the Jew is forfeit; and since, in paying it, it is impossible I should live, all debts are clear'd between you and I, if I might but see you at my death.*[3] *Notwithstanding, use your pleasure: if your love do not persuade you to come, let not my letter.*"

Por. O love! despatch all business, and be-gone.

Bass. Since I have your good leave to go away,
I will make haste; but till I come again,
No bed shall e'er be guilty of my stay,
No rest be interposer 'twixt us twain.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—The Same.—A Room in PORTIA'S House.

Enter PORTIA, NERISSA, LORENZO, JESSICA, *and* BALTHAZAR.

Lor. Madam, although I speak it in your presence,
You have a noble and a true conceit
Of god-like amity; which appears most strongly
In bearing thus the absence of your lord.
But, if you knew to whom you show this honour,
How true a gentleman you send relief,
How dear a lover[4] of my lord your husband,
I know you would be prouder of the work,
Than customary bounty can enforce you.

Por. I never did repent for doing good,
Nor shall not now.
This comes too near the praising of myself;
Therefore, no more of it. hear other things.—
Lorenzo, I commit into your hands
The husbandry and manage of my house,
Until my lord's return: for mine own part,
I have toward Heaven breath'd a secret vow
To live in prayer and contemplation,
Only attended by Nerissa here,
Until her husband and my lord's return.
There is a monastery two miles off,
And there we will abide. I do desire you
Not to deny this imposition,
The which my love, and some necessity,
Now lays upon you.

Lor. Madam, with all my heart:
I shall obey you in all fair commands.

Por. My people do already know my mind,
And will acknowledge you and Jessica
In place of Lord Bassanio and myself.
So fare you well, till we shall meet again.

Lor. Fair thoughts, and happy hours, attend on you!

Jes. I wish your ladyship all heart's content.

Por. I thank you for your wish, and am well pleas'd
To wish it back on you: fare you well, Jessica.—
[*Exeunt* JESSICA *and* LORENZO.
Now, Balthazar,
As I have ever found thee honest, true,
So let me find thee still. Take this same letter,
And use thou all the endeavour of a man,
In speed to Padua: see thou render this
Into my cousin's hand, Doctor Bellario:
And, look, what notes and garments he doth give thee,

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[1] *And then treble that.* Heylin, 1631, says that the ducat was worth 6*s.* 8*d.* sterling; so that Portia's offer of thirty-six thousand ducats placed about $55,000, or, according to the present value of money, $385,000, at Bassanio's disposal.—WHITE.

[2] *A merry cheer*—a merry countenance.

[3] *All debts are cleared between you and I, if I might but see you at my death.*—Mr. Charles Kemble, as stated by Harness, objects to the common punctuation of this passage. He would have a period after "you and I," and make the following clause, "if I might but see you at my death," an independent sentence. The reason given for the proposed change is, that the present punctuation implies a want of generosity on Antonio's part, in seeming to make his seeing Bassanio a condition of his forgiving him his debt. The passage, however, "If I might but see you," &c., does not appear to be added as a positive condition of pardon, but as an after-thought, in a vein of mournful pleasantry and graceful compliment. If this passage were made an independent sentence, expressive of an earnest wish to see Bassanio, it might be taken as a covert way of stimulating Bassanio to the payment of the debt, and thus the exquisite tenderness and dignity of the whole letter would be much impaired.

[4] *Lover.*—In our author's time this term was applied to those of the same sex who had an esteem for each other.—MALONE.

Bring them, I pray thee, with imagin'd speed[1]
Unto the Tranect,[2] to the common ferry
Which trades to Venice. Waste no time in words,
But get thee gone: I shall be there before thee.
Balth. Madam, I go with all convenient speed.
[*Exit.*
Por. Come on, Nerissa: I have work in hand
That you yet know not of. We'll see our husbands,
Before they think of us.
Ner. Shall they see us?
Por. They shall, Nerissa; but in such a habit,
That they shall think we are accomplished
With that we lack. I'll hold thee any wager,
When we are both accoutred like young men,
I'll prove the prettier fellow of the two,
And wear my dagger with the braver grace;
And speak between the change of man and boy,
With a reed voice; and turn two mincing steps
Into a manly stride; and speak of frays,
Like a fine bragging youth; and tell quaint lies,
How honourable ladies sought my love,
Which I denying, they fell sick and died;
I could not do withal:[3]—then, I'll repent,
And wish, for all that, that I had not kill'd them.
And twenty of these puny lies I'll tell,
That men shall swear, I have discontinued school
Above a twelvemonth. I have within my mind
A thousand raw tricks of these bragging Jacks,
Which I will practise.
But come: I'll tell thee all my whole device
When I am in my coach, which stays for us
At the Park gate; and therefore haste away,
For we must measure twenty miles to-day.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—Venice.—A Street.

Enter SHYLOCK, SALANIO, ANTONIO, *and* Gaoler.

Shy. Gaoler, look to him: tell not me of mercy.—
This is the fool that lends out money gratis.—
Gaoler, look to him.
Ant. Hear me yet, good Shylock.
Shy. I'll have my bond; speak not against my bond:
I have sworn an oath that I will have my bond.
Thou call'dst me dog before thou hadst a cause,
But, since I am a dog, beware my fangs.
The Duke shall grant me justice.—I do wonder,
Thou naughty gaoler, that thou art so fond[4]
To come abroad with him at his request.
Ant. I pray thee, hear me speak.
Shy. I'll have my bond; I will not hear thee speak:
I'll have my bond, and therefore speak no more.
I'll not be made a soft and dull-ey'd fool,
To shake the head, relent, and sigh, and yield
To Christian intercessors. Follow not;
I'll have no speaking: I will have my bond.
[*Exit* SHYLOCK.
Salan. It is the most impenetrable cur,
That ever kept with men.
Ant. Let him alone:
I'll follow him no more with bootless prayers.
These griefs and losses have so 'bated me,
That I shall hardly spare a pound of flesh
To-morrow to my bloody creditor.—
Well, Gaoler, on.—Pray God, Bassanio come
To see me pay his debt; and then I care not.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—Venice.—A Court of Justice.

The DUKE, *the* Magnificoes, ANTONIO, BASSANIO, GRATIANO, SALARINO, SALANIO, *and others, discovered.*

Duke. What, is Antonio here?
Ant. Ready, so please your Grace.
Duke. I am sorry for thee: thou art come to answer
A stony adversary, an inhuman wretch
Uncapable of pity, void and empty
From any dram of mercy.
Ant. I have heard,
Your Grace hath ta'en great pains to qualify
His rigorous course; but since he stands obdurate,
And that no lawful means can carry me
Out of his envy's[5] reach, I do oppose
My patience to his fury, and am arm'd
To suffer with a quietness of spirit
The very tyranny and rage of his.
Duke. Go, one, and call the Jew into the Court.
Salan. He's ready at the door. He comes, my lord.
Duke. Make room, and let him stand before our face.—

Enter SHYLOCK.

Shylock, the world thinks, and I think so too,
That thou but lead'st this fashion of thy malice
To the last hour of act; and then, 'tis thought,
Thou'lt show thy mercy, and remorse,[6] more strange

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[1] *With imagin'd speed*—with celerity like that of imagination.—STEEVENS.

[2] *Tranect.*—Shakespeare most likely obtained this word from some novel to which he resorted for his plot. It is supposed to be derived from the Italian, *tranare* (to draw), owing to the passage-boat on the Brenta being drawn over a dam by a crane, at a place about five miles from Venice.—COLLIER.

[3] *I could not do withal*—I could not help it.

[4] *Fond*—foolish.

[5] *Envy's.*—*Envy* is frequently used by Shakespeare in the sense of *malice*, hatred.

[6] *Remorse.*—*Remorse*, in our author's time, generally signified *pity, tenderness.*—MALONE.

Than is thy strange apparent cruelty;
And where[1] thou now exact'st the penalty,
Which is a pound of this poor merchant's flesh,
Thou wilt not only lose the forfeiture,
But, touch'd with human gentleness and love,
Forgive a moiety of the principal;
Glancing an eye of pity on his losses,
That have of late so huddled on his back,
Enow to press a royal merchant[2] down,
And pluck commiseration of his state
From brassy bosoms, and rough hearts of flint,
From stubborn Turks and Tartars, never train'd
To offices of tender courtesy.
We all expect a gentle answer, Jew.

Shy. I have possess'd your Grace of what I purpose;

And by our holy Sabbath have I sworn
To have the due and forfeit of my bond.
If you deny it, let the danger light
Upon your charter, and your city's freedom.
You'll ask me, why I rather choose to have
A weight of carrion flesh, than to receive
Three thousand ducats? I'll not answer that:
But, say, it is my humour:[3] is it answer'd?
What if my house be troubled with a rat,
And I be pleas'd to give ten thousand ducats
To have it baned?[4] What, are you answered yet?
Some men there are love not a gaping pig;[5]
Some, that are mad if they behold a cat.
Now, for your answer:
As there is no firm reason to be render'd,
Why he cannot abide a gaping pig,
Why he, a harmless necessary cat,
So can I give no reason, nor I will not,
More than a lodg'd hate, and a certain loathing,
I bear Antonio, that I follow thus
A losing suit against him. Are you answer'd?

Bass. This is no answer, thou unfeeling man,
To excuse the current of thy cruelty.

Shy. I am not bound to please thee with my answer.

Bass. Do all men kill the things they do not love?

Shy. Hates any man the thing he would not kill?

Bass. Every offence is not a hate at first.

Shy. What! would'st thou have a serpent sting thee twice?

Ant. I pray you, think you question with the Jew.
You may as well go stand upon the beach,
And bid the main flood bate his usual height;
You may as well use question with the wolf,
Why he hath made the ewe bleat for the lamb;
You may as well forbid the mountain pines
To wag their high tops, and to make no noise,
When they are fretten[6] with the gusts of heaven;
You may as well do anything most hard,
As seek to soften that (than which, what harder?)
His Jewish heart.—Therefore, I do beseech you,
Make no more offers, use no further means,
But with all brief and plain conveniency,
Let me have judgment, and the Jew his will.

Bass. For thy three thousand ducats here is six.

Shy. If every ducat in six thousand ducats
Were in six parts, and every part a ducat,
I would not draw them: I would have my bond.

Duke. How shalt thou hope for mercy, rend'ring none?

Shy. What judgment shall I dread, doing no wrong?
You have among you many a purchas'd slave,
Which, like your asses, and your dogs, and mules,
You use in abject and in slavish parts,
Because you bought them:—shall I say to you,
Let them be free;—marry them to your heirs;—
Why sweat they under burthens?—let their beds
Be made as soft as yours; and let their palates
Be season'd with such viands? You will answer,
The slaves are ours.—So do I answer you:
The pound of flesh, which I demand of him,
Is dearly bought; 'tis mine, and I will have it.
If you deny me, fie upon your law!
There is no force in the decrees of Venice.
I stand for judgment; answer; shall I have it?

Duke. Upon my power I may dismiss this Court,
Unless Bellario, a learned Doctor,
Whom I have sent for to determine this,
Come here to-day.

Salar. My lord, here stays without
A messenger with letters from the Doctor,
New come from Padua.

Duke. Bring us the letters: call the messenger. [*Exit an* Attendant.

Bass. Good cheer, Antonio! What, man, courage yet!
The Jew shall have my flesh, blood, bones, and all,
Ere thou shalt lose for me one drop of blood.

Ant. I am a tainted wether of the flock,

---

[1] *Where*—whereas.

[2] *A royal merchant.*—When the French and Venetians, in the beginning of the thirteenth century, had won Constantinople, the French, under the Emperor Henry, endeavored to extend their conquests into the provinces of the Grecian empire on the *terra firma;* while the Venetians, who were masters of the sea, gave liberty to any subjects of the republic who would fit out vessels, to make themselves masters of the isles of the Archipelago and other maritime places: and to enjoy their conquests in sovereignty: only doing homage to the republic for their several principalities.—WARBURTON.

[3] *It is my humour.*—The Jew being asked a question which the law does not require him to answer, stands upon his right, and refuses; but afterwards gratifies his own malignity by such answers as he knows will aggravate the pain of the inquirer. I will not answer, says he, as to a legal or serious question, but since you want an answer, will this serve you?—JOHNSON.

[4] *Baned.*—White says, in the early copies this word was "contracted thus, 'bain'd;' but a contraction of the modern orthography would confound the verb with 'ban.'"

[5] *Gaping pig.*—By a *gaping* pig, Shakespeare, I believe, meant a pig prepared for the table. So in Fletcher's Elder Brother: "And they stand *gaping* like a roasted pig."—MALONE.

[6] *Fretten.*—This is the old form of fretted.

Meetest for death: the weakest kind of fruit
Drops earliest to the ground; and so let me.
You cannot better be employ'd, Bassanio,
Than to live still, and write mine epitaph.

Re-enter Attendant, *with* NERISSA, *dressed like a Lawyer's Clerk.*

Duke. Came you from Padua, from Bellario?
Ner. From both, my lord. Bellario greets your Grace. [*Presents a letter.*
Bass. Why dost thou whet thy knife so earnestly?
Shy. To cut the forfeiture from that bankrupt there.
Gra. Not on thy sole, but on thy soul, harsh Jew,
Thou mak'st thy knife keen;[1] but no metal can,
No, not the hangman's ax, bear half the keenness
Of thy sharp envy. Can no prayers pierce thee?
Shy. No, none that thou hast wit enough to make.
Gra. O, be thou damn'd, inexorable dog;
And for thy life let justice be accus'd!
Thou almost mak'st me waver in my faith,
To hold opinion with Pythagoras,
That souls of animals infuse themselves
Into the trunks of men. Thy currish spirit
Govern'd a wolf, who, hang'd for human slaughter,
Even from the gallows did his fell soul fleet,
And whilst thou lay'st in thy unhallow'd dam,
Infus'd itself in thee; for thy desires
Are wolfish, bloody, starv'd, and ravenous.
Shy. Till thou canst rail the seal from off my bond,
Thou but offend'st thy lungs to speak so loud.
Repair thy wit, good youth, or it will fall
To endless ruin.—I stand here for law.
Duke. This letter from Bellario doth commend
A young and learned Doctor to our Court.—
Where is he?
Ner. He attendeth here hard by,
To know your answer, whether you'll admit him.
Duke. With all my heart:—some three or four of you
Go give him courteous conduct to this place.—
[*Exeunt* GRATIANO, SALARINO, *and* SALANIO.
Mean time, the Court shall hear Bellario's letter.

[Clerk reads.] "*Your Grace shall understand, that at the receipt of your letter I am very sick; but in the instant that your messenger came, in loving visitation was with me a young doctor of Rome; his name is Balthazar. I acquainted him with the cause in controversy between the Jew and Antonio, the merchant: we turned o'er many books together: he is furnished with my opinion; which, better'd with his own learning, the greatness whereof I cannot enough commend, comes with him, at my importunity, to fill up your Grace's request in my stead. I beseech you, let his lack of years be no impediment to let him lack a reverend estimation, for I never knew so young a body with so old a head. I leave him to your gracious acceptance, whose trial shall better publish his commendation.*"

Duke. You hear the learn'd Bellario, what he writes:
And here, I take it, is the Doctor come.—

Re-enter GRATIANO, SALARINO, *and* SALANIO, *with* PORTIA, *dressed like a Doctor of Laws.*

Give me your hand. Came you from old Bellario?
Por I did, my lord.
Duke. You are welcome: take your place.
Are you acquainted with the difference
That holds this present question in the Court?
Por. I am informed throughly[2] of the cause.—
Which is the merchant here, and which the Jew?
Duke. Antonio and old Shylock, both stand forth.
Por. Is your name Shylock?
Shy. Shylock is my name.
Por. Of a strange nature is the suit you follow;
Yet in such rule, that the Venetian law
Cannot impugn[3] you, as you do proceed.—
You stand within his danger,[4] do you not?
[*To* ANTONIO.
Ant. Ay, so he says.
Por. Do you confess the bond?
Ant. I do.
Por. Then must the Jew be merciful.
Shy. On what compulsion must I? tell me that.
Por. The quality of mercy is not strain'd;
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven
Upon the place beneath: it is twice bless'd;
It blesseth him that gives, and him that takes:
'Tis mightiest in the mightiest: it becomes
The throned monarch better than his crown:
His sceptre shows the force of temporal power,
The attribute to awe and majesty,
Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings,
But mercy is above this sceptred sway;
It is enthroned in the hearts of kings,
It is an attribute to God himself;
And earthly power doth then show likest God's,
When mercy seasons justice. Therefore, Jew,
Though justice be thy plea, consider this,—
That in the course of justice none of us

---

[1] *Not on thy sole, but on thy soul, harsh Jew,*
Thou mak'st thy knife keen.
The conceit is that Shylock's soul was so hard that it had given an edge to his knife.—WARBURTON.

[2] *Throughly.*—Through and thorough are different forms of the same word.—WHITE.

[3] *Impugn*—oppose.

[4] *Within his danger.*—Within his danger was, in Shakespeare's time, and long before, equivalent to indebted to him: the phrase has no necessary reference to the peril of Antonio's position, but may mean merely that he owes Shylock money, unless we suppose Shakespeare to have had a double meaning.—COLLIER.

Should see salvation: we do pray for mercy,
And that same prayer doth teach us all to render
The deeds of mercy. I have spoke thus much,
To mitigate the justice of thy plea,
Which if thou follow, this strict Court of Venice
Must needs give sentence 'gainst the merchant there.

Shy. My deeds upon my head. I crave the law;
The penalty and forfeit of my bond.

Por. Is he not able to discharge the money?

Bass. Yes, here I tender it for him in the Court;
Yea, twice the sum: if that will not suffice,
I will be bound to pay it ten times o'er,
On forfeit of my hands, my head, my heart.
If this will not suffice, it must appear
That malice bears down truth:[1] and, I beseech you,
Wrest once the law to your authority:
To do a great right, do a little wrong,
And curb this cruel devil of his will.

Por. It must not be. There is no power in Venice
Can alter a decree established:
'Twill be recorded for a precedent;
And many an error, by the same example,
Will rush into the State. It cannot be.

Shy. A Daniel come to judgment! yea, a Daniel!—
O wise young judge, how do I honour thee!

Por. I pray you let me look upon the bond.

Shy. Here 'tis, most reverend Doctor; here it is.

Por. Shylock, there's thrice thy money offer'd thee.

Shy. An oath, an oath, I have an oath in Heaven:
Shall I lay perjury upon my soul?
No, not for Venice.

Por. Why, this bond is forfeit,
And lawfully by this the Jew may claim
A pound of flesh, to be by him cut off
Nearest the merchant's heart.—Be merciful;
Take thrice thy money: bid me tear the bond.

Shy. When it is paid according to the tenour.—
It doth appear, you are a worthy judge:
You know the law; your exposition
Hath been most sound: I charge you by the law,
Whereof you are a well-deserving pillar,
Proceed to judgment. By my soul I swear,
There is no power in the tongue of man
To alter me. I stay here on my bond.

Ant. Most heartily I do beseech the Court
To give the judgment.

Por. Why then, thus it is:—
You must prepare your bosom for his knife;—

Shy. O noble judge! O excellent young man!

Por. —For the intent and purpose of the law,
Hath full relation to the penalty
Which here appeareth due upon the bond.

Shy. 'Tis very true. O wise and upright judge!
How much more elder art thou than thy looks!

Por. Therefore, lay bare your bosom.

Shy. Ay, his breast;
So says the bond:—doth it not, noble judge?—
Nearest his heart: those are the very words.

Por. It is so. Are there balance here to weigh
The flesh.

Shy. I have them ready.

[1] *Truth*—honesty.

Por. Have by some surgeon, Shylock, on your charge,
To stop his wounds, lest he should bleed to death.
Shy. It is not nominated in the bond.
Por. It is not so express'd; but what of that?
'Twere good you do so much for charity.
Shy. I cannot find it; 'tis not in the bond.
Por. Come, merchant, have you anything to say?
Ant. But little: I am arm'd, and well prepar'd.—
Give me your hand, Bassanio: fare you well.
Grieve not that I am fallen to this for you;
For herein Fortune shows herself more kind
Than is her custom: it is still her use
To let the wretched man out-live his wealth,
To view with hollow eye, and wrinkled brow,
An age of poverty, from which lingering penance
Of such a misery doth she cut me off.
Commend me to your honourable wife:
Tell her the process of Antonio's end;
Say, how I lov'd you, speak me fair in death;
And, when the tale is told, bid her be judge,
Whether Bassanio had not once a love.
Repent not you that you shall lose your friend,
And he repents not that he pays your debt;
For, if the Jew do cut but deep enough,
I'll pay it instantly with all my heart.
Bass. Antonio, I am married to a wife
Which is as dear to me as life itself;
But life itself, my wife, and all the world,
Are not with me esteem'd above thy life:
I would lose all, ay sacrifice them all
Here to this devil, to deliver you.
Gra. I have a wife, whom, I protest, I love:
I would she were in Heaven, so she could
Entreat some power to change this currish Jew.
Shy. [*Aside.*] These be the Christian husbands! I have a daughter;
Would any of the stock of Barrabas[1]
Had been her husband rather than a Christian!
[*To* PORTIA.] We trifle time; I pray thee pursue sentence.
Por. A pound of that same merchant's flesh is thine:
The Court awards it, and the law doth give it.
Shy. Most rightful judge!
Por. And you must cut this flesh from off his breast:
The law allows it, and the Court awards it.
Shy. Most learned judge!—A sentence! come, prepare!
Por. Tarry a little: there is something else.—
This bond doth give thee here no jot of blood;
The words expressly are, a pound of flesh:
Take then thy bond, take thou thy pound of flesh;
But, in the cutting it, if thou dost shed
One drop of Christian blood, thy lands and goods
Are by the laws of Venice confiscate
Unto the State of Venice.
Gra. O upright judge!—Mark, Jew:—O learned judge!
Shy. Is that the law?
Por. Thyself shall see the Act;
For, as thou urgest justice, be assur'd,
Thou shalt have justice, more than thou desirest.
Gra. O learned judge!—Mark, Jew:—a learned judge!
Shy. I take this offer then: pay the bond thrice,
And let the Christian go.
Bass. Here is the money.
Por. Soft!
The Jew shall have all justice;—soft!—no haste:—
He shall have nothing but the penalty.
Gra. O Jew! an upright judge, a learned judge!
Por Therefore, prepare thee to cut off the flesh.
Shed thou no blood; nor cut thou less, nor more,
But just a pound of flesh: if thou tak'st more,
Or less, than a just pound,—be it so much
As makes it light, or heavy, in the substance,
Or the division of the twentieth part
Of one poor scruple,—nay, if the scale do turn
But in the estimation of a hair,
Thou diest, and all thy goods are confiscate.
Gra. A second Daniel, a Daniel, Jew!
Now, infidel, I have thee on the hip.
Por. Why doth the Jew pause? take thy forfeiture.
Shy. Give me my principal, and let me go.
Bass. I have it ready for thee: here it is.
Por. He hath refus'd it in the open Court:
He shall have merely justice, and his bond.
Gra. A Daniel, still say I; a second Daniel!—
I thank thee, Jew, for teaching me that word.
Shy. Shall I not have barely my principal?
Por. Thou shalt have nothing but the forfeiture,
To be so taken at thy peril, Jew.
Shy. Why then the Devil give him good of it.
I'll stay no longer question.
Por. Tarry, Jew:
The law hath yet another hold on you.
It is enacted in the laws of Venice,
If it be prov'd against an alien,
That by direct, or indirect attempts
He seek the life of any citizen,
The party, 'gainst the which he doth contrive,
Shall seize one half his goods: the other half
Comes to the privy coffer of the State;
And the offender's life lies in the mercy
Of the Duke only, 'gainst all other voice.
In which predicament, I say, thou stand'st
For it appears by manifest proceeding,
That, indirectly, and directly too,
Thou hast contriv'd against the very life
Of the defendant, and thou hast incurr'd
The danger formerly by me rehears'd.
Down, therefore, and beg mercy of the Duke.
Gra. Beg that thou may'st have leave to hang thyself;
And yet, thy wealth being forfeit to the State,
Thou hast not left the value of a cord;
Therefore, thou must be hang'd at the State's charge.
Duke. That thou shalt see the difference of our spirit,

[1] *Barrabas.*—'*Bar*rabas,' and not 'Barr*a*bas,' seems to have been the pronunciation as well as the orthography of this name among the Elizabethan dramatists.—WHITE.

I pardon thee thy life before thou ask it.
For half thy wealth, it is Antonio's:
The other half comes to the general State,
Which humbleness may drive into a fine.
Por. Ay, for the State; not for Antonio.[1]
Shy. Nay, take my life and all; pardon not that:
You take my house when you do take the prop
That doth sustain my house; you take my life
When you do take the means whereby I live.
Por. What mercy can you render him, Antonio?
Gra. A halter gratis; nothing else; for God's sake!
Ant. So please my lord the Duke, and all the Court,
To quit the fine[2] for one half of his goods.
I am content, so he will let me have
The other half in use, to render it,
Upon his death, unto the gentleman
That lately stole his daughter:
Two things provided more,—that, for this favour,
He presently become a Christian;
The other, that he do record a gift,
Here in the Court, of all he dies possess'd,
Unto his son Lorenzo, and his daughter.
Duke. He shall do this, or else I do recant
The pardon that I late pronounced here.
Por. Art thou contented, Jew? what dost thou say?
Shy. I am content.
Por. Clerk, draw a deed of gift.
Shy. I pray you, give me leave to go from hence.
I am not well. Send the deed after me,
And I will sign it.
Duke. Get thee gone, but do it.
Gra. In christ'ning thou shalt have two godfathers;
Had I been judge thou should'st have had ten more.[3]
To bring thee to the gallows, not the font.
[*Exit* SHYLOCK.
Duke. Sir, I entreat you with me home to dinner.
Por. I humbly do desire your Grace of pardon:
I must away this night toward Padua,
And it is meet I presently set forth.
Duke. I am sorry that your leisure serves you not.
Antonio, gratify this gentleman,
For, in my mind, you are much bound to him.
[*Exeunt* DUKE, Magnificoes, *and Train.*
PORTIA *and* NERISSA *retire up the stage and throw off their disguises.*
Bass [*Going up the stage with* ANTONIO *and friends.*] Most worthy gentleman——
Por. You are all amaz'd:
Here is a letter, read it at your leisure;
It comes from Padua, from Bellario:
There you shall find, that Portia was the Doctor:
Nerissa there, her clerk. Antonio;
I have better news in store for you.
Than you expect: unseal this letter soon;
There you shall find, three of your argosies
Are richly come to harbour suddenly.
You shall not know by what strange accident
I chanced on this letter.
Ant. I am dumb.
Bass. Were you the Doctor, and I knew you not?
Gra. Were you the clerk—
Por. You are not satisfied
Of these events at full. Let us go in;
And charge us there upon inter'gatories,
And we will answer all things faithfully.
[*Exeunt.*

[1] *Ay, for the State; not for Antonio.*—That is, the State's moiety may be commuted to a fine, but not Antonio's.—MALONE.

[2] *To quit the fine, &c.*—Antonio does not mean that he is content to release Shylock from the decree of the State with regard to one-half of his goods,—which would be an impertinence not akin to Antonio's character,—but to leave (quit) the fine to the mercy of the State, while he on his side shows mercy by not claiming the fee simple of the other half, but only its use,—that is, the product derivable from it,—till the Jew's death, rendering it then to his son-in-law and heir, Lorenzo.

[3] *Ten more.*—Jurymen were jestingly called godfathers. So in "The Devil is an Ass," by Ben Jonson: "I will leave you to your godfathers in law. Let twelve men work."

ANALYSIS OF THE PLAY, BY GERVINUS.

In the centre of the actors in the play, in a rather passive position, stands Antonio, the princely merchant, of enviable immense possessions, a Timon, a Shylock, in riches, but with a noble nature elevated far above the effects, which wealth produced in these men. Placed between the generous and the miser, between the spendthrift and the usurer, between Bassanio and Shylock, between friend and foe, he is not even remotely tempted by the vices, into which these have fallen; there is not the slightest trace to be discovered in him of that care for his wealth, which Salanio and Salarino impute to him, who in its possession would be its slaves. But his great riches have inflicted another evil upon him, the malady of the rich, who have been agitated and tried by nothing, and have never experienced the pressure of the world. He has the spleen, he is melancholy; a sadness has seized him, the source of which no one knows; he has a presentiment of some danger, such as Shakespeare always imparts to all sensitive, susceptible natures. In this spleen, like all hypochondriacs, he takes delight in cheerful society; he is surrounded by a number of parasites and flatterers, among whom is one more noble character, Bassanio, with whom alone a deeper impulse of friendship connects him. He is affable, mild, generous to all, without knowing their tricks, without sharing their mirth; the loquacious versatility, the humor of a Gratiano is nothing to him; his pleasure in their intercourse is passive, according to his universal apathy. * * * * But he is not, therefore, to appear quite feelingless. For in one point he shows that he shared gall, flesh, and blood with others. When brought into contact with the usurer, the Jew Shylock, we see him in an agitation, which partly flows from moral and business principles, partly from intolerance, and from national religious aversion. This point of honor in the merchant against the money-changer and usurer, urges him to those glaring outbursts of hatred, when he rates Shylock in the Rialto about his usances, calls him a dog, foots him, and spits upon his beard. For this he receives a lesson for life in his lawsuit with the Jew, which with his apathetic negligence he allows to run ahead of him. The danger of life seizes him, and the apparently insensible man is suddenly drawn closer to us; he is suffering, so that high and low intercede for

him; he himself petitions Shylock; his situation weakens him; the experience is not lost for him; it is a crisis, it is the creation of a new life for him; finally, when he is lord and master over Shylock, he rakes up no more his old hatred against him, and in Bassanio's happiness and tried friendship there lies henceforth for the man roused from his apathy, the source of renovated and ennobled existence.

Unacquainted with this friend of Bassanio's, there lives at Belmont his beloved Portia, the contrast to Antonio, upon whom Shakespeare has not hesitated to heap all the active qualities, of which he has deprived Antonio; for in the womanly being, kept modestly in the background, these qualities will not appear so overwhelmingly prominent, as we felt that, united in the man, they would have raised him too far above the other characters of the piece. Nevertheless Portia is the most important figure in our drama, and she forms even its true central point, as for her sake, without her fault or knowledge, the knot is entangled, and through her and in her conscious effort it is also loosened. She is just as royally rich as Antonio, and as he is encompassed with parasites, so is she by suitors from all lands. She too, like Antonio, and more than he, is wholly free from every disturbing influence of her possessions upon her inner being. She carries out her father's will, in order to secure herself from a husband, who might purchase her beauty by the weight. Without this will, she was of herself of the same mind; wooed by princely suitors, she loves Bassanio, whom she knew to be utterly poor. She too, like Antonio, is melancholy, but not from spleen, not from apathy, not without cause, not from that ennui of riches, but just from passion, from her love for Bassanio, from care for the doubtful issue of that choice, which threatens to betray her love to chance. A completely superior nature, she stands above Antonio and Bassanio, as Helena above Bertram, more than Rosaline above Biron and Juliet above Romeo: it seems that Shakespeare at that time created and endowed his female characters in the conviction, that the woman was fashioned out of better material than the man. On account of the purity of her nature, she is compared to the image of a saint, on account of the strength of her will to Brutus's Portia; Jessica speaks of her as without her fellow in the world, giving to her husband the joys of heaven upon earth. The most beautiful and the most contradictory qualities, manly determination and womanly tenderness, are blended together in her. * * * * * She is superior to all circumstances, that is her highest praise; she would have accommodated herself to any husband, for this reason her father might have felt himself justified in prescribing the lottery; he could do so with the most implicit confidence; she knows the contents of the caskets, but she betrays it not. Once she has sent from her eyes speechless messages to Bassanio, and now she would gladly entertain him some months before he chooses, that she may at least secure a short possession; but no hint from her facilitates his election. And yet she has to struggle with the warm feeling, which longs to transgress the will; it is a temptation to her, but she resists it with honor and resolution. Only, quick in judgment, skilled in the knowledge of men, and firm in her treatment, she knows how to frighten away the utterly worth-

less lovers by her behavior; so superior is she in all this, that her subsequent appearance as judge is perfectly conceivable. Famous actresses, such as Mrs. Clive in Garrick's time, have used this judgment-scene as a burlesque to laugh at, a part in which the highest pathos is at work, and an exalted character pursues the most pure and sacred object.

Between both, Portia and Antonio, stands Bassanio, the friend of the one, the lover of the other, utterly poor between the two boundlessly rich, ruined in his circumstances, inconsiderate, extravagant at the expense of his friend. He seems quite to belong to the parasitical class of Antonio's friends. In disposition he is more inclined to the merry Gratiano than to Antonio's severe gravity; he appears on the stage with the question—"When shall we laugh?" and he joins with his frivolous companion in all cheerful and careless folly. This time he borrows once more three thousand ducats, to make a strange Argonautic expedition to the Golden Fleece, staking them on a blind adventure, the doubtful wooing of a rich heiress. His friend breaks his habit of never borrowing on credit, he enters into an agreement with the Jew upon the bloody condition, and the adventurer accepts the loan with the sacrifice. And before he sets forth, even on the same day and evening, he purchases fine livery for his servants with this money, and gives a merry feast as a farewell, during which the daughter of the invited Jew is to be carried off by one of the free-thinking fellows. Is not the whole, as if he were only the seeming friend of this rich man, that he might borrow his money, and only the seeming lover of this rich lady, that he might pay his debts with her money?

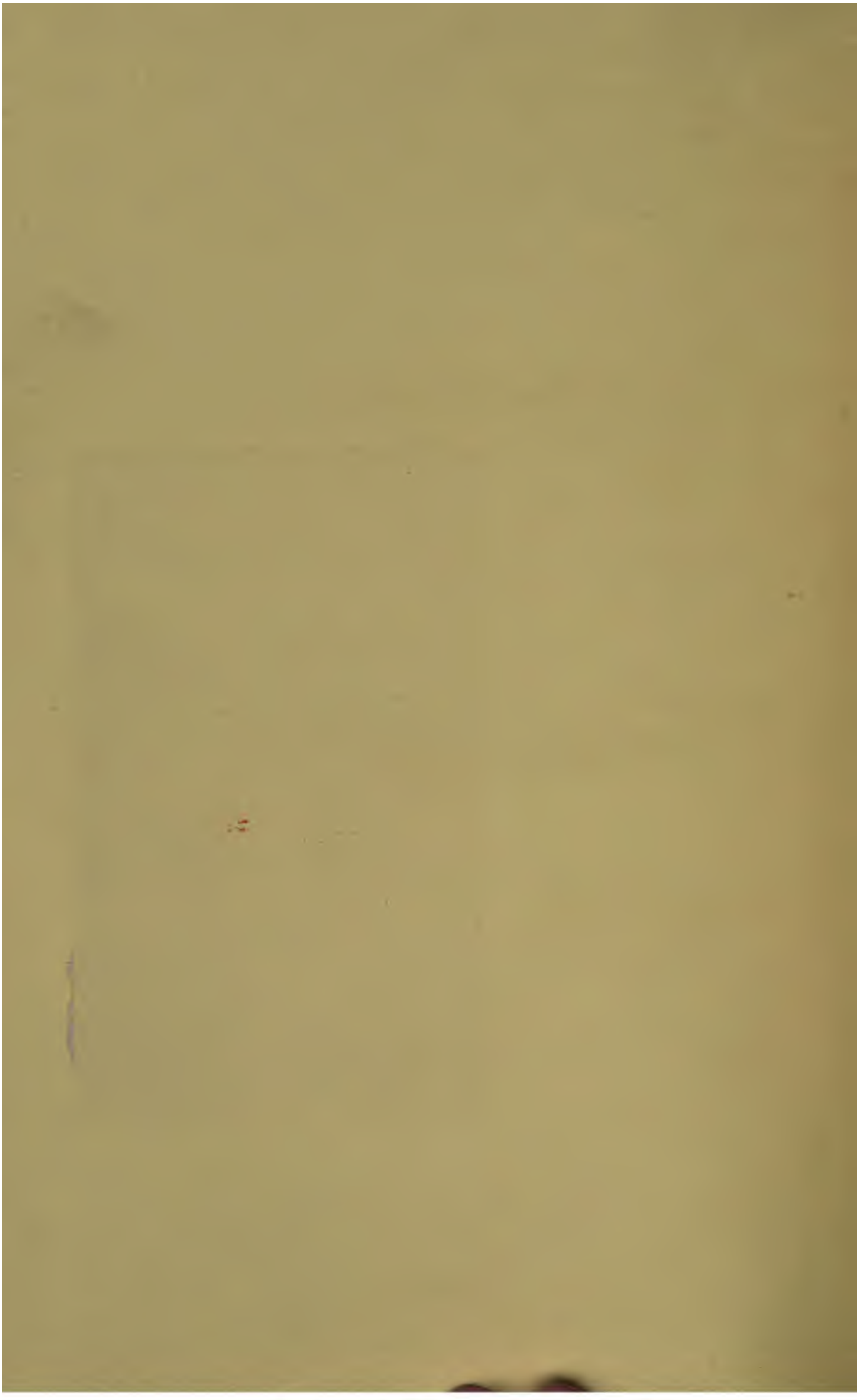
But this quiet Antonio seemed to know the man of bad appearance to be of better nature. He knew him indeed as somewhat too extravagant but not incurably so, as one who was ready and able even to restrict himself. He knew him as one who stood "within the eye of honor," and he lent to him, without a doubt of his integrity. His confidence was unlimited, and he blames him rather that he should "make question of his uttermost," than if he had made waste of all he has. In his melancholy, it is this man alone who chains him to the world; their friendship needs no brilliant words, it is unfeignedly genuine. His eyes, full of tears at parting, tell Bassanio, what he is worth to Antonio; it is just the acceptance of the loan which satisfies Antonio's confidence. * * * *

Bassanio's choice is crowned by success; or more justly, his wise consideration of the father's object and of the mysterious problem, meets with its deserved reward. But his beautiful doctrine of show is to be tested immediately, whether it be really deed and truth. His adventurous expedition has succeeded through his friend's assistance and loan. But at the same moment, in which he is at the climax of his happiness, his friend is at the climax of misfortune and in the utmost danger ot his life, and this from the very assistance and loan, which have helped Bassanio to his success. In the very prime of his wedding happiness the horror of the intelligence concerning Antonio occurs. Now the genuineness of the friend shows itself. The intelligence disturbs his whole nature. He goes on his wedding-day—Portia herself

permits not, that they should be married first,—to save his friend, to pay thrice the money borrowed, in the hope of being able to turn aside the law in this case of necessity. But Portia proves even here her superior nature. She sees more keenly, what an inevitable snare the inhuman Jew has dug for Antonio: she adopts the surest idea, of saving him by right and law itself; she had at the same time a plan for testing the man of her love. * * * * * She saves her friend from despair, and his friend from death, at the same moment that amid their torments she is observing their value. Antonio has in this catastrophe to atone for all that he had sinned against Shylock through sternness, Bassanio for all that of which he was guilty through frivolity, extravagance, and participation in the offences against the Jew: the best part of both is exhibited through their sufferings in their love for each other, and Antonio's words, the seal of this friendship, must have penetrated deeply into Portia's heart. But with equally great agitation she hears the words of Bassanio, that he would sacrifice his wife, his latest happiness, to avert the misfortune which he had caused. This disregard of her must enchant her: this was standing the fiery test. Whilst she turns the words into a jest, she has the deepest emotion to overcome: with those words, the sin is forgiven of which Bassanio was guilty. By his readiness for this sacrifice he first deserves the friend, whom he had brought near to death through the wooing of this wife and the means of pressing his suit, which Antonio had given him; and by this also he first deserves his wife, who could not be called happily won by a fortunate chance, which was at once the evil destiny of his friend. * * * * * *

Shylock is the contrast, which we hardly need explain, although indeed in this age of degeneration of art and morals, lowness and madness could go so far as to make a martyr on the stage of this outcast of humanity. The poet has certainly given to this character, in order that he may not sink quite below our interest, a perception of his paria-condition, and has imputed his outburst of hatred against Christians and aristocrats, partly to genuine grounds of annoyance. Moreover, he has not delineated the usurer from the hatred of the Christians of that time against all that was Jewish, else he would not have imparted to Jessica her lovely character. But of the emancipation of the Jew he knew indeed nothing, and least of all the emancipation of this Jew, whom Burbadge in Shakespeare's time acted in a character frightful also in exterior, with long nose and red hair, and whose inward deformity, whose hardened nature, is far less determined by religious bigotry, than by the most terrible of all fanaticism, that of avarice and usury. He hates indeed the Christians as Christians, and therefore Antonio who has mistreated him; but he hates him far more, because by disinterestedness, by what he calls "low simplicity," he destroys his business, because he lends out money gratis, brings down the rate of usance, and has lost him half a million. Riches have made him the greatest contrast to that which they have rendered Antonio, who throughout appears indifferent, incautious, careless, and generous. Shylock on the other hand is meanly careful, cautiously circumspect, systematically quiet, ever inwardly shufflingly occupied, like

the genuine son of his race, disdaining not the most contemptible means, nor the most contemptible object, speculating in the gaining of a penny, looking so far into the future and into small results, that he sends the greedy Launcelot into Bassanio's service, and against his principle he eats at night at Bassanio's house, only for the sake of feeding upon the prodigal Christian. This trait is given to him by the poet in a truly masterly manner, in order subsequently to explain the barbarous condition, on which he lends Antonio that fatal sum. Shakespeare after his habit has done the utmost to give probability to this most improbable degree of cruelty, which, according to Bacon's words, appears in itself to every good mind, a fabulous tragic fiction. Antonio has mistreated him; at the moment of the loan he was like to mistreat him again; he challenges him to lend it as to an enemy; he almost suggests to him the idea, which the Jew places, as if jestingly, as a condition of the loan; and he, the man railed at for usury, will now generously grant it without interest, to the man who never borrowed upon advantage. The same crafty speculation and prospect which, at all events, is attended with one advantage, underlies this idea: in one case the show of disinterestedness, in the other the opportunity for a fearful revenge. Had the Jew really only partially trifled with the idea of such a revenge, the poet does every thing to make a jest fearfully earnest. Money had effaced every thing human from the heart of this man, he knows nothing of religion and moral law, but when he quotes the Bible in justification of his usury; he knows of no mercy, but to which he can be compelled; nothing of justice and mercy dwells in him, nothing of the affection of kindred. His daughter is carried away from him; he is furious, not because he is robbed of her, but because she has robbed him in her flight; he would see his daughter dead at his feet, provided that the jewels and gems were in her ears; he would see her hearsed before him, provided the ducats were in her coffin. He regrets the money employed in her pursuit; when he hears of her extravagance, the irretrievable loss of his ducats occasions fresh rage. In this condition he pants for revenge against Antonio, even before there is any prospect of it, against the man, who by long mortifications had stirred up rage and hatred in the bosom of the Jew, and with whose removal his usury would be without an adversary. Obduracy and callousness continue to progress in him, until at the pitch of his wickedness he falls into the pit he had dug, and then, according to the notions of the age, learns from the actions of Antonio and of the Duke, how mercy in a Christian spirit produces other actions, than the unmerciful god of the world, who imposed upon him its laws alone. This awful picture of the effects of a thirst for possession, however strongly it is exhibited, will appear as no caricature to him, who has ever stumbled upon similar evidences in the actual world, in the histories of gamblers and misers.



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